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THE
DIN-I-ILAHI

THE
DIN-I-ILAHI

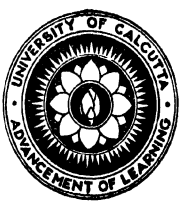
OR

THE RELIGION OF AKBAR

BY

MAKHANLAL ROYCHOUDHURY, M.A., B.L.,
SASTRI

PREMCHAND ROYCHAND SCHOLAR, MOUAT GOLD MEDALIST
PROFESSOR, T. N. JUBILEE COLLEGE, BHAGALPUR



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DEDICATED

TO

THE SACRED MEMORY OF

MY FATHER AND MOTHER

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FOREWORD

I have great pleasure in commending to students of the Mughal period of the Indian History, Prof. Makhanlal Roy Choudhury's book on the *Din-i-Ilahi* or the religion of Akbar. While all the biographies of Akbar contain some reference to the subject dealt with in this book, yet there is no work which deals elaborately and specifically with this important theme. Prof. Roy Choudhury has brought to the discussion of Akbar's religion a profound study of the original sources, and has also carried on research on his own account, with the result that his book is a masterly exposition of the *Din-i-Ilahi* of Akbar. The work is planned on an extensive scale, and is not only sound and instructive but also highly interesting. After having surveyed the historical and cultural background of Akbar's period, the author describes at length the various forces that were at work at that time. He then deals with the various religious communities, who, as important factors at the Court of Akbar, contributed their respective shares to the evolution of the *Din-i-Ilahi*—the Sunnis, the Shias, the Hindus, the Jains, the Sikhs, the Buddhists, the Parsis, the Jews and, last but not the least, the Christians. The author accurately summarises the results of the impact of these various communities at the Court of Akbar and the resultant trend

thereof which ultimately culminated in the establishment of the *Din-i-Ilahi*.

Covering, as the book does, an extensive ground, it is not possible that all the conclusions of the author will find ready acceptance. To take but one of the many controversial points in the book, I may refer to the author's conclusions about the religion of Akbar himself. It is well-known that various historians of Akbar's period, and also his biographers, have come to the conclusion that Akbar practically—and some hold, even formally and openly—renounced Islam. Of these, the late Mr. Vincent Smith, an eminent writer of Indian history, in his life of Akbar, is definitely of opinion that Akbar renounced Islam. The author does not share that view. He holds, on the contrary, that inspite of his having founded the *Din-i-Ilahi*, Akbar continued to be a Muslim to the last; and he attributes, what he regards as a wrong conclusion on the part of Vincent Smith, to his having misread the original text on the subject. But the author is, no doubt, aware that almost all contemporary writers hold that he was not at all a believer in Islam. And it cannot be said that there are no reliable materials and data from which we may justly come to that conclusion. At the same time, students of Indian history of Akbar's period will be deeply interested in the study of the facts brought together by the author in support of the view propounded by him—that

Akbar remained a Muslim to the last chapter of his life. It is not my duty to take sides in this highly interesting controversy between the author and several of his predecessors. But I have referred to this one particular point, as showing how the materials of Indian history are still undergoing a process of re-interpretation, and to what extent the author has made a contribution towards it. His book is learned and luminous, and should attract wide attention in circles interested in the study of the Mughal period of Indian history.

PATNA UNIVERSITY,
PATNA.
The 1st July, 1941.

SACHCHIDANANDA SINHA,
Vice-Chancellor,
Patna University.

PREFACE

The history of India is yet to be written. Formerly we read the history of kings, queens, battles, and sieges. To-day we read the history of men and thoughts. The perspective of history has changed—nay, it has been revolutionised. No longer a student is satisfied with the old review of things. History is now a science of man—the man within, and the man in the world and outside. Every age has a philosophy of its own and man interprets that philosophy by the life he lives. History is the study of that philosophy interpreted by examples—the actions of the individual unconsciously form the spokes in the wheel of progress. No event is isolated and no action is complete by itself. If the trasformation of energy explains the evolution of the Universe of matter, the individual thoughts and actions reveal and accelerate the progress of the Universe of mind. The present comes out of the womb of the past and the future is embedded in the present. There is an unbroken continuity through the past, present and future.

In the onward flow of civilization, we sometimes come across waves and curves which often find explanation in the actions of the individuals. But they must not be taken in isolation. They

generally form the parts of vaster current flowing through different channels. But they are nothing if not movements of the Universal current flowing through all ages. When there is a sudden upheaval in one country at a particular period of time, there is a vibration in every direction in the common level. This is particularly true of the great upheaval of the 16th century of Indian history—I mean, the age of Akbar. It was an age of Renaissance in Europe, of Mehdi movement in Islam, Ming revival in China, and of the Sufi forces and Bhakti cult in India. In the 16th century of the Christian era, every civilised country in the world was pulsating with a new life; new orders of things were on the anvil, vigorous dynasties appeared—in England the Tudors, in France the Bourbons, in Spain and Austria the Hapsburgs, in Prussia the Hohenzollerns, in Turkey the Osmanlis, in Egypt the Mamluks, in Persia the Safavis, in Transoxiana the Sahabanids, in China the Mings, in India the Timurids—all in the same period. Greatness of the individual kings rather realised the spirit of the Age—Henry VIII and Elizabeth in England, Henry IV in France, Fredrick William in Prussia, Sigismund in Austria, Philip II in Spain, Soleiman in Turkey, Shah Ismail and Shah Tahmasp in Persia, the Sahabani Khan in Transoxiana, Yung Lo in China and Babar and Akbar in India. Indeed the unison was perfect.

European writers on the Timurids in India tried to explain the life and actions of the great Emperor Akbar as mere accidents. They made an isolated study of Akbar without reference to the Central Asian background, neglecting the unity of the Islamic movements of the period. The range of their study was circumscribed by the conception of history current in the 19th century. They interpreted the facts of Timurid India as mere isolated accidental happenings. Few of them tried to enter into the spirit that inspired the movement of Indian events—their currents and cross currents. Their life was different and the perspective was exclusive. As such their interpretations of Indian history were coloured by their predilections. They depended on the contemporary writers on Muslim India who were mere narrators of events. These writers were ecclesiastics, merchants, adventurers and travellers. The scope of their writings was determined by the nature of the professions to which they belonged. Even stray acquaintance with Muslim chronicles did not alter their angle of vision, because almost all the Muslim chroniclers were mere writers of events (*waqi'a nawis*), and their conception of history may be gathered from the name they gave to history—"*Twarikh*" (date records). Thus in the light of stereotyped conception of history, with materials of doubtful value furnished by contemporary European recorders of events

and with chronicles maintained by Muslim chronologists at their command, the European historians failed in many cases to offer reliable interpretations of Indo-Muslim thoughts and events. Moreover most of the early English writers were obsessed with a feeling of superiority when they wrote the history of the conquered people of India—specially of the Muslims from whom they conquered Hindustan. They laid stress on Akbar as a conqueror, as an empire-builder and as an administrator. They showered encomiums on Akbar for his personal qualities, for his versatility. Certainly Akbar deserves a good deal of what has been said of him as a builder of the Timurid empire in India and as a founder of some institutions which survive even to-day. But that is only one side of the medal. The explanation of Akbar's life and contemporary events is incomplete unless they are treated in the spirit of the atmosphere he breathed, the ideals for which he stood and the cultural synthesis which he and his great associates brought about. The veil of seclusion that had concealed India from the gaze of the outside world was no longer there, she was no longer dead to the play of forces that were working in the contemporary world. A mere narration of events of the age of the Emperor Akbar is not a satisfactory approach to the history of that important epoch of the Indians. Without a study of the cultural and intellectual activities of the Ibadat Khana—

the first parliament of the religions of the world—it is impossible to understand the forces and ideals for which India had been working for centuries. Indian civilisation has a wonderful capacity of assimilating extraneous currents and transmitting her own to others. The Din-i-Ilahi of Emperor Akbar clearly demonstrated how the Central Asian forces, winding their course through the Semitism of Arabia and filtering through the Monism of Iran, were ultimately Aryanised by the touch of Hindustan. The contribution of the different cultures, as represented in that great Hall of Worship, to the transformation and Indianisation of Islam was immense, though the process had already begun. Maintaining the basis of real Islam, the great savants of the age metamorphosed and crystallised the spirit of the age into a Sufi order, called the "Din-i-Ilahi." Indeed, without the study of the Din-i-Ilahi, the history of the 16th-century India is incomplete. In this book I have attempted to offer an interpretation of the movement of forces that worked in India throughout this period and to estimate the contribution of Akbar to the new synthesis which characterised this very important epoch of Indian history.

Before I conclude, I must acknowledge my thanks to Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M.A., B.L., D.Litt., Barrister-at-Law, M.L.A., Ex-Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, for the encouragement I received from him, and to Dr. S. N. Sen, M.A.,

P.R.S., Ph.D. (Cal.), B.Litt. (Oxon.), Keeper of Imperial Records, New Delhi, for the help he gave me. Prof. N. C. Banerjee, M.A., Ph.D., of Calcutta University, obliged me by ungrudingly suggesting some interesting interpretations of old facts. Prof. Priyaranjan Sen, M.A., P.R.S., Kavyatirtha, has placed me under a deep debt of gratitude by going through the MSS. Dr. R. P. Tripathi, M.A., D.Sc. (Lond.) of Allahabad was kind enough to discuss my interpretations and suggest new lights. My thanks are offered to them. Maulana M. E. Zakaria, formerly editor of *Momin Gazette* of Cawnpore, also deserves my gratefulness for interpreting the theological abstractions of Islam from the orthodox standpoint.

Finally, I must thank Mr. D. B. Gangulee, Superintendent, Calcutta University Press, and his staff—and especially Mr. J. Roy—for the valuable help which I received from them in the course of the printing of the book.

BHAGALPUR,
The 7th March, 1941.

M. L. R.-C.

INTRODUCTION

In the absence of any original work on the DIN-I-ILAHI, writers of the 19th century interpreted the religion of Akbar according to theories current in the period. Western writers of the History of the East tended to bring everything Eastern into line with Western notions. Western political principles were accepted to be ideals of government. One point of similarity with the West in the life and manners of an Eastern Sovereign was supposed to be a feather in the cap of his greatness. Western political principles like "a state has no connection with religion," "statecraft is a purely secular affair," "the conception of a nation presupposes religious unity," and so forth, had become standards of thought among historians. They too readily concluded influences and borrowings from the West in all such cases of similarity. In the absence of any treatise on Akbar's religion, historians gave full play to their fancies. Some found Akbar's religion "to be the outcome of a political necessity, the need of a universal religion in which Hindoos and Muslims could join." According to them Akbar, like Elizabeth of England and Henry IV of France, "was actuated by the motive of a compromise." A few asserted that "Akbar became the supreme head of the Church because he wanted to

keep the warring factions at peace." Others judged Akbar from an entirely secular point, viewing his ordinances as very personal. They said that "Akbar had a fondness for flattery, a weakness for adoration." One suggested that Akbar "founded a new religion in order that he might pose himself as God or at least the vicegerent of God."[1] Another remarked, "Akbar allowed prostration before himself because he liked to be treated as God on Earth." Remarks like these have been made and swallowed by unsuspecting readers as truths of history. They are generally astounding and pleasing and also easy to remember, being clad in familiar Western words. Few people take pains to enter into the sources of these remarks and fewer still have opportunity of seeing things through by examining the originals in a true spirit of inquiry. Even Dr. Smith, the author of "Akbar the Great Mogul," did not hesitate to say, "The whole scheme was the outcome of a ridiculous vanity, a monstrous growth of unrestrained autocracy. . . . The new faith was but a testimony to his grasping ambition, his pompous desire to be the Emperor, Pope and Prophet rolled into one. . . . It was the love of power that induced Akbar to deny the authority of the Prophet and start a new religion."

In Ain No. 77 Abul Fazl promised to write separately on Akbar as "a Spiritual Guide

[1] This is due to a misreading of Mulla Sheri's verse, which was a sarcasm quoted by Badauni.

to the people," but sudden murder did not permit him to fulfil his pious intentions. The subject has been treated by Badauni in his "Muntakhabu-t Twarikh." He has discussed the regulations of Akbar purely from the point of view of a Mulla. The "Dabistan-i-Mazahib," a work written about 60 years after Akbar's death, has discussed the principles of the religious views of the Emperor. Modern European writers have mostly based their conclusions on the testimonies of a hostile association in the court of the Emperor and of the Jesuits then in India. Badauni specially is the basis of Dr. Smith's conclusions,—and what are Badauni's credentials ?

Abdul Qadir Badauni entered the court along with Abul Fazl in 1572 and was put into office with Abul Fazl. Badauni lamented that the "time-serving" and "flattering" Abul Fazl gradually rose higher and higher in the court while "his own star" remained in a "static position."[2] Indeed it was really tormenting for Badauni to see his colleague and class-mate go so high up while he remained an ordinary courtier and "leader of Wednesday prayers,"[3] more than once for his

[2] See J.R.A.S., 1869, Blochmann's article on Badauni. Badauni seems to have been no less time-serving. Though he criticised *Sijdah*, he himself made *Zaminbos* (*Sijdah*) three times.

[3] Abul Fazl and Badauni read together under Shaikh Mubarak. Both were good students and were well-read. Badauni grew jealous of Abul Fazl's rise, and his personal grudge and jealousy were vented in his discussions round the religious views of Akbar, Abul Fazl and Faizi.

incapacity and for overstaying leave he was driven out of office, only to be reinstated on the recommendations of Faizi. Badauni was so charitable and grateful that he never used a word in favour of his benefactor, Faizi![4] Badauni thus describes the death-bed scene of Faizi, "The Emperor went to visit him when he was on his last gasp; Faizi barked like a dog in his face, his face was swollen and his lips had become black. . . ." Then he composed a monogram on the death of the famous poet :—

"A dog has gone from the world in an abominable state."[6]

And yet another :—

"Faizi the inauspicious, the enemy of
the Prophet,
Went bearing on him the brand of curses,
He was a miserable and hellish dog, and hence
The words 'what dog-worshipper had died'
give the date of his birth."[7]

Hatred of Badauni for Faizi was so violent that he could not even condescend to praise the poems of Faizi. Badauni remarks, "His (Faizi's) taste is lewd, raving in boastful verses and infidel

4 Badauni, Muntakhbu-t Twarikh, II, Lowe, p. 420.
5 *Ibid*, p. 420.
6 1003 A.H. (one year short).
7 1004 A.H.

scribblings. He was entirely devoid of love of truth, of the knowledge of God." But Faizi was made the Poet-Laureaute by the Emperor and had composed about 20,000 couplets. His command over rhetoric, we know, has not yet been surpassed, and, as a poet, Faizi is a class by himself. Still, in his hatred for Faizi, Badauni says, "He (Faizi) wrote poetry for a period of 40 years, but it was all imperfect. He could set up the skeleton of verses well but the bones had no marrow in them, and the salt of his poetry was entirely without savour." Badauni does not find "even one couplet amongst them that is not as much without fire as his withered genius, and they are despised and rejected to such an extent that no one, even in lewdness, studies his verse as they do those of the other base poets."

Badauni could not tolerate even the slightest difference of opinion. He seldom alludes to Birbal as other than a "hellish dog." Muhammad of Basakwan, a learned man of Timur's time, is called "hyprocrite and filthy" because he had written "*Titul*" "science of the expressed and implied language."

Badauni deplores his own fate because he had to translate the Ramayana into Persian, for in course of translation he had to write the names of Hindu Gods like Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

At Lahore a Shia was killed by a Sunni, for "the former had spoken disrespectfully of the

first four Khalifas." Badauni had no words of pity for the murdered man, who, he wrote, "has the face like that of a pig," but "the Sunni murderer was a hero." When his own son died, he attributed the untimely death to his not reading the Quran at his birth.

So far as religion was concerned, Badauni was essentially the type of a Sunni who does not only hate a non-believer but who cannot even stand the sight of one who would not believe in things which he had faith in. In his blind fanaticism he ceased to be a historian while he dealt with the religious views of Akbar. He distorted and suppressed facts to suit his own conclusions. He quoted only portions of the regulations of Akbar, because quotations of them *in toto* would defeat his purpose. For example: along with the killing of cows, Akbar prohibited the killing of camels, horses, dogs and other domestic animals. But Badauni quoted only a part of the Ain, *viz.*, that regarding the killing of cows, and so proved Akbar to be anti-Islam because cow is sacred to the Hindus.[8] "From such a man like Badauni can we expect that Akbar's deviations from religious orthodoxy would find no favour," and "we have to discount his stories concerning the same as being certainly exaggerated."[9] Even Khafi Khan is of opinion that

[8] Similar references will be quoted when we discuss the "Ains" (regulations) of Akbar. See *post*, pp. 226-68.

[9] Pringle Kennedy, History of the Mongols, Vol. I, pp. 285-86.

Badauni ought not to have said and written of Akbar as he had done.[10] Akbar was a king who would not only reign but would also rule. He would, unlike others before him, not willingly be a tool in the hands of a Mulla theocracy. In course of his administration he found that the Mullas and the Qazis had interfered too much with affairs of state, often with corrupt motives and pernicious results. He turned many Qazis out of their offices for bribery ; many were deprived of their "Aymas."[11] Some Qazis were angry that Brahmins had been engaged in deciding disputes in which Hindus were concerned as accused or in which both the parties were Hindus; also because the highest court of appeal was no longer the Sadr-us-Sadur or Makhdum-ul-Mulk but the Emperor himsef.

Christians who came to the court of Akbar were mostly Jesuit priests. They were by no means historians, and the despatches, reports and letters which they sent to their masters at home or at the eastern central station at Goa, were mostly religious in nature. References to contemporary events are certainly to be found in them but they are to be judged very critically before they can be accepted as materials of history. Their

[10] Seir-al Mutakharin, Vol. I, p. 196.

[11] For religious endowments, see Badauni, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Lowe, p. 207. Some Qazis were exchanged for horses at Qandahar after the Bengal rebellion for political reasons.

despatches mostly dealt with religious matters and were often coloured by their own religious predilections, so deep rooted in the Christians of the 16th century. Their perspective was never historical—they wrote whatever came in their way, without taking care to verify them.

When Vasco da Gama landed at Calicut, he thought he saw Christian churches there ; in them he heard Christian bells, recognised Christian shepherds known as Kafir, and noticed a Nayar who wore top-knot to show that he belonged to Christianity ![12] Vasco da Gama's statement was accepted as true for 200 years. Then it was found out that the Churches referred to, were nothing but domes of the Hindu temples of Siva, which appeared to be like the churches of the Portuguese; the bells referred to were those rung by Hindus at the time of their evening prayers; and the priests mentioned were none other than the Brahmin priests of the Temple. Such is sometimes the standard of accuracy of the Portuguese travellers or missionaries who visited the country in the early days of Christian advent ! Dr. Smith has often emphasised the versions of the Western writers without caring to judge them in the light of unbiassed criticism. Take, for example, the story of the fall of Asirgarh.

Asirgarh fell, according to Abul Fazl, owing to

[12] Payne, Scenes and Characters from Indian History, pp. 90-92.

the pestilence which carried away 25,000 men from the fort and owing to the " devices " of Akbar; but according to " Relacam " of Guerreiro, whose account was the source for Du Jarric, the fort fell on account of the treachery of the Emperor. According to Dr. Smith, the account of Father Xavier is literally true and " deserving of acceptance as being the most authentic history of the events which led to the capitulation of Asirgarh." Smith's " Akbar the Great Mogul," p. 276.) The learned historian denounced the Indian versions as deliberate forgeries and systematic distortions of facts. The account of the Jesuit Father does not exist in the original. The version of Du Jarric is based on Relacam—is a word-for-word translation of what is given in Relacam. Smith claims that he subjected Du Jarric's account to a critical examination and states that Du Jarric had summarised the letters of Xavier. Dr. Smith says that the " Histoire " of Du Jarric contains a detailed account of the siege. He also asserts that Guerreiro in his Relacam gives no details and confirms Du Jarric's statement that the capitulation was obtained by treachery. But as a matter of fact, Guerreiro gives a detailed account of the siege and not Du Jarric whose account is rather " a word-for-word translation of that given in Relacam." It is strange that Dr. Smith makes references to and gives quotations from Relacam, Part 1, the actual volume where the account of the

siege occurs; but he has not compared Du Jarric's version with Guerreiro's and found out the truth. Possibly Dr. Smith was very imperfectly acquainted with these two works.

Payne says that the Portuguese were often wrongly informed or even hoaxed, and we are compelled to share his views in the light of facts. What were Dr. Smith's conclusions about the siege of Asirgarh? He says that Father Xavier was present at the siege and hence his version cannot be untrue. But our reading of the facts proves that Father Xavier was not present at the siege of Asirgarh. Had Father Xavier been really present there, he would surely have mentioned the great famine which had caused so much havoc amongst the defenders of the fort which we get from all contemporary authors, namely, Faizi Sarhindi, Abul Fazl and the author of Zafar-ul-Walih (Arabic history of Gujrat). Again, the account of the murder of Muqarib Khan by Akbar during the siege, as given by the Jesuit, is against all evidence. We know it for certain, from direct evidences of Faizi Sarhindi and of Zafar-ul-Walih, that the death of Muqarib was a case of suicide. But Xavier says that Muqarib was killed by Akbar. Further, the very name of Bahadur Khan, the king of Khandesh, against whom the war was going on, has been wrongly put by the Jesuit Father. It, therefore, becomes difficult to believe that the Portuguese writer was present at the siege.

Dr. Smith rejects the account of Abul Fazl as entirely baseless and deliberate falsification, on the ground that he has not mentioned the treachery of Akbar in connection with the fall of Asirgarh.[13] We are sorry to say that Dr. Smith has not gone carefully through Abul Fazl's version in Akbarnama. In Volume III, Akbarnama definitely mentions the deceptions and simulations practised by Akbar to procure the capitulation of the fort; so where is the attempt of Abul Fazl to hide it? We would say with Rev. Payne that "Dr. Smith's references are equally misleading and inaccurate and his investigation is of a perfunctory nature."[14]

Regarding the honesty of Abul Fazl's account let us quote the remark of Price in his Preface to Elliot's Volume VI.[15] Price observes, "His (Abul Fazl's) veneration for the Emperor amounted almost to adoration. Apart from occasional blemishes, his faults are those of the rhetorician rather than of the flatterer, and his style ought to be judged by an oriental standard, not by a contrast with the choicest of European memoirs." Blochmann says, "Abul Fazl has far too often been accused by European writers of flattery, and even of wilful concealment of facts damaging to the reputation of his master. A study of the Akbar-

[13] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

[14] Payne, Intro., *op. cit.*, p. xxxv.

[15] Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, pp. 7-8.

nama will show that the charge is absolutely unfounded." (J.R.A.S., 1869, article on Badauni by Blochnann.)

Dr. Smith has taken the Jesuit accounts regarding Akbar's religion as gospel truth, because Badauni's versions tally with theirs on many points. But we must say that both were actuated by similar motives, and often Badauni and the Mulla party supplied information for the Jesuit writers. The Jesuit priests came to India with the motive of converting the "Mogors,"[16] and there have been similar attempts by Christian priests for converting the "Mogors of Central Asia." At first, when Akbar's invitation reached the Jesuits, they thought that the Emperor's motives were political[17]; and so it was only after a good deal of hesitancy that the highest Jesuit priest decided to send a Mission.

To start with, they were all praise for Akbar. The encomiums used by the members of the first Mission are often so flattering that they seem to have been written by hired eulogists. On reaching Agra the Fathers began to collect information about the Emperor, and in their credulity they eagerly swallowed all they heard about him. It was certainly a revolution from the point of view of

[16] Pringle Kennedy, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Chap. I.

[17] De Sousa, Oriente Conquistado, Vol. II, p. 150. There was a suspicion in the mind of the Governor of Goa that Akbar might keep the Fathers as hostages. Moreland is of opinion that Akbar would have called the Jesuits even if all political motives were absent.

the Mullas and the orthodox party that Akbar, a Muslim Emperor, should go beyond the usual Sunni interpretations and consult non-Mulsims for his 'knowledge.' Hence, they began to manufacture and circulate all sorts of 'news and views' regarding the Emperor. The Fathers simply despatched those calumnious bits of information to their headquarters in India and Europe. As the Emperor began to enquire more and more about *Truth*, and as they found their chances of converting the Emperor growing remote every day, they also began to grow cold. Again, when they found the Emperor giving them audience and permitting them to make conversions and build churches, they grew elated; at once followed despatches narrating all the stories of the Emperor's apostasy with all the prospects of conversion. The Fathers wrote that all the mosques at Lahore had been ordered to be demolished and that the study of the Quran had been suspended in the Empire. Du Jarric avows that "Akbar promised to become a Christian even at the cost of his kingdom in case the Fathers would explain to him the Trinity and incarnation."[18] The Portuguese and the Jesuits are often so inconsistent amongst themselves that if we

[18] Similar passages occur in almost all Jesuit narratives. Maclagan says, "Akbar would have become Christian but for his wives, for if he became Christian he would have to forsake his wives all except one." Du Jarric says, "Akbar actually distributed all his wives amongst his courtiers and kept only one."

compare them (specially regarding the story of Akbar's death), it becomes palpable that the Fathers had first-hand knowledge in very few things.[19]

Even the ordinary state regulations of Akbar have been condemned and interpreted by the Mullas with distrust and suspicion. Badauni was very angry with Akbar because he had opened "*Dharampura*" and "*Yogipura*" for "non-believers." Social and political regulations have been interpreted and interdicted from a religious point of view. A charge against Akbar is that he stopped pilgrimage to Mecca. But we know it definitely, from the testimony of the third Mission, that, even in the last years of his life, he sent members of his family to Mecca on pilgrimage. During the period of the so-called transition (1572-82) he had given every intending pilgrim a sum of Rs. 600 as passage money. A regular department, known as the Haji Department, had been started and was placed under an officer, Mir-i-Haj. This department had one hundred ships (*Jahaz-i-Illahi*) reserved for the pilgrims. There are evidences that Akbar used to send clothes and presents to Mecca as a part of religious duty, and that he was contemplating the foundation of a pilgrim house at Mecca. During the discussions of the Ibadat Khana, it was

[19] French traveller Laval says, "Akbar promised to become a Christian and gave hopes that he would become a Christian, should he be permitted all his wives, as his religion allowed, and pending the solution of the question, he died."

found that the Mir-i-Haj and Sadr, who were the guardians of the Pilgrim Fund, had embezzled money. Mirza Azam Khan,[20] a staunch Musalman, returned from Mecca with a great disgust for the Sharifs of Mecca for their corrupt practices. Conditions in the Holy Land were in no sense better than those in India. Owing to Portuguese piracy, journey to Mecca by sea was no longer safe. Tickets issued by Christian shipowners bore the picture of Mary on their back. The orthodox could not condescend to accept a ticket with a picture, for it would be countenancing idolatry. The route by land was controlled by the *Qazibillis* (Shias of Persia) and the life of a Sunni was never safe in the land of the Shias. Akbar for some time discouraged pilgrimage to Mecca from the point of view of state policy. Even a staunch Musalman like Sekandar Lodi had stopped Haj for women and regulated pilgrimage.[21] Akbar made regulations for the pilgrims and not against the institution of pilgrimage.

There were some other regulations to which exception may be taken from a religious point of view. The customary words at the top of a book "*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir Rahim*" were changed into "*Allah-o-Akbar.*" The Mullas suggested that the new words were a sly substitution of the

[20] Bad., Lowe, Vol. II, p. 412; Blochmann, Ain, p. 325.
[21] Tarikhi Dawdi, E. & D., Vol. IV, pp. 445-46.

personal name of Akbar for that of God.[22] Badauni rebuked Abul Fazl for this innovation and interdicted him as an apostate.[23] But we find Faizi beginning his famous book "*Naldaman*" with the customary "*Bismillah*, etc." It was no innovation in Islam to begin books without "*Bismillah*, etc." This epithet "*Bismillah*, etc.," is an imitation of the Persian Zoroastrian phrase "*Banam-i-Bakshainda-i-Bakhshaishgar-i-Meherban.*"[24] (In the name of God the charitable and the merciful.) It has not been everywhere in use. "*Kafiah*," an Arabic Grammar by Ibn-i-Hajib, does not contain the customary words in praise of God. In Sharah-i-Jami and Tahrir-i-Sambat, commentaries on that book, absence of the customary words in praise of God have been discussed and Ibn-i-Hajib has been supported. There are many books which begin with "*Alhamdu-lillah*" instead of "*Bismilla*, etc." Even some orthodox Muslims do not write the long customary sentence but simply put the name of God, through the numerals 786, on their books. Akbar was quite a good Musalman but the sad fact is that he had, on account of his state regulations, displeased the orthodox theocracy.

The 16th century was a century of upheavals : no civilised country escaped the wave of *Renaissance*,

[22] Badauni, *op. cit.*, Lowe, Vol. II, pp. 212, 267.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

[24] Jamshedji Lumji Api, *Jartash-nama*, Preface.

and forces were working from different directions and at different angles. The life and actions of Akbar cannot be explained by themselves without their context. The forces that had been working in him, were not Indian only. The psychology of Akbar was a complex phenomenon; unlike, Asok he was an emperor first and a priest next.

In the first chapter, we have described the setting of the Indian stage on which Akbar appeared. The time was propitious, and the ground had been prepared by the Hindu Saints and Muslim Sufis. A spirit of eclecticism and fusion was on the anvil. Forces were at work which would have moulded the life of Akbar even without many of the polititical events.

In the second chapter, the hereditary traits (of Chengiz and Timur and of their families) have been depicted. Inspite of all the liberal tendencies of the age, Akbar could not be absolutely free from the Central Asian influences. Many of the social regulations of Akbar can be explained by a reference to the manners and customs of his ancestors.

The third chapter shows that Akbar was by birth a mystic, by heredity a lover of knowledge, by experiences of early life impressionable and by court influences a Sunni. Here we notice the extremely devout bent of Akbar's temperament. The foundation of the Ibadat Khana was a testimony to his reverence and faith in God and Islam and it was not the fruit of his scepticism and apostasy.

The fourth chapter deals with the discussions in the Ibadat Khana. Akbar was amazed at the variety of interpretations of the Texts. The Ibadat Khana, which, to start with, was a hall of worship for the Sunnis, was thrown open to other sections of Islam, and, ultimately, also to non-Muslims. The Ibadat Khana became a real parliament of religions. On the other hand, Akbar was disgusted by the discovery of the dishonesty of the Qazi department in the distribution of lands, of the Sadr in the grant of religious endowments, and of the Mir-i-Haj in the administration of pilgrim grants. Akbar had to issue many regulations for reasons of state, which the Mullas interpreted from the religious point of view.

In Appendix A to this chapter the extra-Indian forces, especially of Bagdad and Teharan, leading to the acceptance of Mahzar, have been examined.

In Appendix B to this chapter, three paintings have also been examined. They illustrate the religious practices of Akbar and of some courtiers and their environments.

The fifth chapter finds that the ever-expanding soul of Akbar could no longer be satisfied by the Mulla interpretations of the laws of God. The Ibadat Khana was thrown open to non-Muslims also—Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Zoroastrians, Jew and Christians. Here we have estimated the influences of the different forces at work and their

respective contributions to the psychological changes in Akbar.

In the sixth chapter, a classified summary of the Ains—regulations—have been given, though, strictly speaking, the *life* of a Musalman follows no such classification : to the orthodox there is nothing purely religious and nothing purely secular. We have discussed the different backgrounds of these regulations; it has been shown that Akbar hardly ever did anything which was not allowed by the Quran or the Hadis or by some of his predecessors.

In an Appendix to this chapter the life of Badauni and his Mulla standpoint have been elaborately discussed, with a view to depicting the spirit and angularity of the contemporary theocratic mind.

In the seventh chapter the Din-i-Ilahi has been discussed. The principles from the Persian texts have been given. The ceremonies, initiations and symbols connected with the religion have been described.

In the last chapter the Din-i-Ilahi in practice has been described. We have stated the reasons for its non-acceptance by all and sundry and the non-missionary character of the religion. Akbar did not want that this Sufi cult should be accepted by each and every one. Incidentally we have tried to show that Akbar never renounced Islam and that he was a Mussalman all through his life. An estimate of Akbar in relation to the Din-i-Ilahi has been given.

CHAPTER I

THE INDIAN BACKGROUND

Certainly instances are not wanting when Muslim monarchs have been guilty of crimes in the name of religion in spite of Commandments to the contrary. Timur has been credited with having killed 6,000,000 human beings, only " to change his land of the infidels into that of the believers " (Darul Harb into Darul Islam). After the victory at Ajmer, he was greeted with a turret of welcome built of 70,000 heads of the slaughtered and they were not unbelievers. One hundred thousand men were butchered at Sirusthi (Srabasthi) and all in the name of Islam.[1] Sultan Bayezid would kill at least two Christians every day to celebrate his meals[2]: the dying shrieks of the victims would be the music to his dinner. Sekandar Lodi slaughtered 15,000 Hindus in one day to prove his love for Islam. He stopped the bathing of the Hindu pilgrims in the Jamuna at Allahabad and forbade the barbers from shaving heads of pilgrims.[3] Hundreds of similar instances

1 In regard to these facts, we are indebted to historians who, out of fanaticism, added to the list of crimes of their heroes. In their eyes, the larger number of victims, attributed to the religious zeal of their heroes, made them greater still in the eyes of the Muslim world.

2 Lane-Poole (Turkey. Story of Nations series), pp. 46-73.

3 Titus, Indian Islam, pp. 11-12.

could be given to prove the spirit of intolerance, and bigotry, in the believers. In fact there are passages in the Quran وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ("And kill them wherever you find them"),[4] which has been construed as "giving permission to kill."

In spite of these commands supposed to justify the slaughter of infidels which were given purely from secular points of view, we find revelations in the Quran which breathe an atmosphere of toleration to the non-believers and of a compromise with them. "He professed his good-will to the Christians, as an inclinable to entertain friendship for the true believers." He exhorted his followers "not to dispute, but in the mildest manner," against those "who have received the Scriptures, and ushered to come to a just determination between both parties, that they all worshipped not any but God." "Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian but one resigned unto God

[4] Chap. II, Verse 191.

There has been much comment on this verse. The adverse critics of Islam have opined that, in this verse, the Quran has given 'permission to kill.' But this verse must be read along with the previous one. The pronoun "them" has its noun in the verse preceding, which has permitted the believers to "war with those who fight with you" (believers).—V. 190. So "them" refers to those who fight with the Muslims. Thus in Verse 191, the Quran permitted the killing of those who were fighting with the believers. It is an occasional commandment, not a general command. Even in this permission, we read a note of toleration, for the Quran says, "Do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not like those who exceed the limits."—Verse 190, Chap. II.

(Muslim) "; " excellence is in the hand of God; He gives it unto whom He pleases." Muhammad further permitted the professors of every religion certain rights " about which He prohibits all disputes." The document enunciated after the battle of Badr, which was meant for the Christians and Jews, is a wonderful testimony to the spirit with which the Prophet was animated. Lastly the Prophet says, " If the Lord had pleased, verily all who are on the earth, would have believed in general, wilt thou therefore, forcibly compel men to be true believers? No soul can believe but by the permission of God." David Shea and Antony Troyer are constrained to admit that although " followers too often gave by their conduct a strong denial to these principles, still the existence of them in the Quran was a sanction to all those who were disposed to profess them in words and actions." In the early history of the Muslim Khalifas, we find instances of tolerance of which any nation or religion might be proud. Omar ordered payment of compensation for damages done to the people of the country through which he passed during his Syrian expedition. Omar was so tolerant that he was willing to say his prayers in a Christian Church at Jerusalem. When Muhammad bin Qasim sent information of his exploits to his Khalifa that he had demolished temples, converted Hindus to Islam and successfully waged war against them, the Khalifa " reprimanded him, for it

was against sanction and usage of the Holy Law and ordered Qasim to compensate the damages done by him." [5] The conduct of the Muslims in Spain when they dominated the Christians, is in contrast with the conduct of the Christians after their victory in the East. If that spirit were always translated into action, the history of Islam would have been written otherwise.

When Islam stepped beyond the limits of Arabia, it came into contact with men of different outlooks on life, and the influence of this foreign contact silently worked themselves into Islam. If Arabia had conquered Persia physically, the victim conquered the victor intellectually. When Islam came into contact with the Turks and other nomad tribes of Central Asia, the Turki converts were amazed by the idea of the unity of God and the Islamic principle of universal brotherhood. They were lured by a prospect of a heaven in Islam, glorious with all its mundane joys. This could be secured by a war which would either make him a Shahid (a martyr to the cause of religion) or a Gazi (a killer of enemy), and heaven was both for a Shahid and a Gazi. For these blood-thirsty people, Islam offered two worlds—power in this world and peace in the next. Consequently, in their hands, the true precepts of Islam underwent distortion, as was the case with Christianity in the

[5] Elphinstone, pp. 302-03.

hands of the barbarian conquerors of Europe. The Turki converts changed Islam to suit their own instincts in their own way. A careful study of the early Turks and Afghans, who first invaded, conquered and ruled over Hindusthan, would prove the truth of our statement. Often these invaders had personal motives of conquest ; but when they found that a religious incentive would give a fresh urge, they took advantage of it and declared Jehad—war in the name of religion.

Thus, the historian Utbi [6] says of Mahmud of Gazni that he (Mahmud of Gazni) " demolished idol temples and established Islam in them. He captured cities, killed the polluted wretches, destroying the idolatrous and gratifying Muslims." He then returned home and " promulgated accounts of the victories obtained for Islam..... and vowed that every year he would undertake a holy war against Hind." This spirit of Muhammadan conquest is in sad contrast with that of the first Muslim administration of Sind under the orders of the Khalifa. Hasan Nizami [7] says of Muhammad of Ghor, " he (Ghor) purged by his sword, the land of the Hind from the filth of infidelity and vice, and freed the whole of that country from the thorn of God-plurality and the impurity of idol-worship, and by his royal vigour and his intrepidity left not one

[6] Titus, p. 11.

[7] Tajul-Ma'athir, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II, p. 217.

temple standing." Iltutmish built the crest of the mosque Arhai-din-ka-Jhopra out of the ruins of the temples of Hindus and Jains. The inscription on the temple is a very interesting study regarding the motives of Iltutmish.[8] Alauddin, in spite of his anti-Mulla perorations, would not hesitate to destroy temples, and he erected pulpits and arches of mosques in their place.[9] The peculiar mentality of the much praised Firoz Shah Tughluq, the flower of the Turko-Afghan period, was the type of attitude of the best of the early Muslim conquerors. When Timur-Lang had come to India, the religious objective of the Muslim invaders had been condensed and formulated ; a specimen of this we read in the speeches of Timur on the eve of his Indian expedition, " My object in the invasion of Hindustan is to lead an expedition against the infidels that, according to the law of Muhammad, we may convert to the true faith the people of that country, and purify the land itself from filth of infidelity and polytheism ; and that we may overthrow their temples and idols and become Gazis and Mujahids before God." [10]

Is he not that Timur who led all his expeditions against the believers except in Georgia and partly India ? Is he not that Timur who put 2,000 Shaikhs of Islam one upon the other to build a living

8 Horovitz, Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, p. 30.

9 Amir Khusrau, E. & D., Vol. III, pp. 89 and 543.

10 Malfuzat-i-Timuri, E. & D., Vol. III, p. 397.

human wall, plastered them alive with lime and sand ? Is he not that Timur who destroyed the accredited leader of Islam, we mean the Khalifa, and himself took the title of Khalifat-ul-lillah ? In the name of religion, they excited their soldiers and themselves. In the lands of the non-Muslims, Turks, Afghans, Pathans and Mughal invaders carried the message of death in the name of Muhammad and Islam, and left no stone unturned to convert the land of non-believers into a land of believers.

But in spite of all possible attempts to convert the Hindus to Islam, Islam could not make much headway in India. The Hindus with their age-long culture and deep-rooted religious convictions would not easily change their faith. The old Brahmin [11] (Zunnar-Dar) at the time of Firoz Shah Tughluq and Bhudan at the time of Sekandar Lodi would willingly and gladly offer their lives rather than change their religion ; at places the lees of society changed their religion to avoid Jezia or to avoid persecution ; but mass conversions could not take place. The Hindu masses remained loyal to their ancient faith. The fundamental outlooks of the two faiths are so different that voluntary conversions of the upper class Hindus were few and far between. Still, in course of time, the followers of the two faiths, by long association with each

[11] Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, E & D., Vol. III, p. 365.

other, by a community of interests in daily life, by a community of problems in politics, unconsciously approached each other. Even the most orthodox converts would not and could not give up the manners and customs which had been rooted into them for centuries. The Muslim conquest in India by Turko-Afghans was never thorough as it was in Persia by Arabs.[12] The Turks, Afghans and Pathans, who attempted the earliest conversion in India, were satisfied with the lip-service of the converts—the reading of Kalema and the change of name as in China. Further the Indian conversions were piecemeal and scarcely general. Thus one brother became a Muhammadan while the rest of the family continued to be Hindus living in the same village and locality; one had to borrow the manners and customs of the other. At all stages of social psychology, local instinct always plays an important part. In the Punjab specially, where the activity of the Turks was most prominent, the tribal and local bond has been always stronger than the religious bond.[13] So an approach to fusion was more possible in the Punjab on the common ground of customs rather than on the ground of religious

[12] Arnold is of opinion that if India had been conquered by the Arabs instead of by the Turks, Afghans and Pathans, the preaching of Islam would have been different and with different results.

[13] See transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions, Vol. I, p. 314.

community. The mass of the Punjab Muslims in many places, worship local godlings such as Magti, and Lachi. The Mirasis of Amritsar give offerings to Durga Bhawani. Sitala, the goddess of pox, is worshipped by Pindi Musalmans. Even frontier Muhammadans pay respect to the goddess of pox. The Avars of N. W. Punjab and the Bhats of U. P. use Bramhins as their family priests. The Maimans of Kutch ascetics besmear their bodies with ashes like Hindu Brahmins. The Musalman "Suttars" of the Punjab carry a "danda" (staff) and keep singing. The Sadique Nihang (in Jhang district, the Punjab) Muslim Faqirs keep going a fire called "dhuni."[14] In U. P. Chunihars worship "Kalka Mai" and observe the Sradh ceremony in imitation of the Hindus. Lakshmi Devi is worshipped by the Turknowas of Eastern Bengal. Songs of Lakshmi are still sung by Muslim Faqirs in Western Bengal villages. According to some, the Mushkil-asan cult of Bengal is a relic of the fire-worship of the Hindus. The "Dude-Kulas" of Madras worship tools in the Dashera holidays as do the Hindus in the Biswa Karma Festival. The 'Sada-Sohag' sect (founded in the 15th century) wear women's dress like the devotees of Bechna Devi near Ahmadabad.[15]

[14] Punjab Customary Laws ; Islam in Kashmere, by Ramcharan Kak, in the Journal of Indian History, 1928.

[15] "Madhya Juge Bharater Sadhana" (Bengali), by K. M Sen, 21.

Panch Pir and Pir Badr are still worshipped by the boatmen of Hindu and Musalman sects in Bengal; Satya Narayan Pir is a combination of Hindu god Narayan and Muslim Satya Pir. The Baul cult is an extreme form of Hindu-Muslim sublimation. The Holi, Dewali, Dashera, Basanta-Panchami and Baisakhi festivals are attended both by Hindus and Musalmans together. Same is the case with the Muhurrum. In Kashmir, the Muslims still worship the tutelary godlings of their villages, join Hindu festivals and employ Brahmins at their marriage ceremonies. The Malkana Rajputs, though converts to Islam, are reluctant to describe themselves as Musalmans. Their names are Hindu. They use "Ram, Ram" in their salutations and greetings; they mostly worship in Hindu temples, though, at times, they frequent mosques and practise circumcision and bury their dead. The Matia Kunbis, who were converted to Muhammadanism by Islam Shah Pirana in the 15th century, employ Brahmin priests and refuse to eat with their Muhammadan brethren. The Rasul Shahis of the Punjab drink wine and claim to control superhuman deeds by means of "Tantra" an "Yoga."

In the process of this fusion, the effortless attempts of the saints and faqirs, Hindu and Muhammadan, had done much more than the thousand and one swords of the Islamic conquerors. For, the appeal was to a subtler and softer side

of man, where the ordinary calculations of loss and gain could not weigh much. The Dargha (Muslim pulpits) became a resort of both Hindus and Muslims (1072 A.D.). When Mukhdum Sayid Ali (al Hadjwari) found his resort at Lahore and laid down his mortal remains there,[16] his grave immediately became a place of pilgrimage for both Hindus and Muhammadans. Even to-day, the Bhathi Darwaza of Lahore is a haunt for the Hindu Muslim saints.[17] The Chishti-cult brought by the illustrious saint Mainuddin Chishti to India, is a landmark in the history of Indo-Muslim religious thoughts. He chose a place near the Hindu pilgrimage of Pushkar at Ajmer. His name and reputation spread far and wide and his lustre fell upon India like the rays of the sun and he is called Aftab-i-mulk-i-Hind, "the sun of the land of Hindusthan." The Hindus were so much influenced by the Chishti-cult that we find round about Ajmer a sect called the Husaini Brahmins, who combine the Muslim religion with Hindu manners and customs and rituals. They claim to be Brahmins and declare the Atharva Veda to be their sacred book but at the same time they observe the fast of Ramjan as much as they observe Sivaratri.[18]

[16] For a list of the Muslim Saints and Sufis in India, see Akhbar-ul-Akhiar, by Abdul Haqq (1572 A. D.).

[17] Ganj Bakhsh's contribution to this fusion in the Punjab is interesting

[18] A very sacred fast of the Hindus in honour of their god Shiva "

They beg alms in the name of Hasan, grandson of the Prophet; they bury the dead; practise circumcision; their males wear Muslim dress and use "Tilak"[19] on their forehead, but the females dress like Hindu ladies and use vermilion on their forehead. They style themselves as "Mian Thakur." Just opposite to this, we find Karim Shah becoming a disciple of a Vaishnava saint and repeating Hindu "Om."[20] The Kakas of Gujrat (15th century) have been so much Hinduised that they still retain their Hindu names and follow all Hindu customs though their preceptors are faqirs. Malik Muhammad Jaisi (1540 A.D.) composed a very beautiful allegorical lyric called "Padmavat" on the relation between "atma" and "paramatma." Alwal composed a "Mahabharat" and sang the praise of Siva.[21] Mirza Hasan Ali produced hymns in honour of the goddess Kali; Kulliyat-i-nazir is a treatise on the greatness of "Sri Krishna." The Batyana sect made a considerable approach to Hindu Yoga and Tantra; they began to write books on "Yoga," "Asan," "Deha-Tatwa," "Shat-Chakra."[22] In the Punjab, these books are still found in many of the old families.[23]

[19] Sacred marks of sandal or vermilion, a custom of orthodox Hindus.

[20] The symbol of the highest Trinity of Hinduism.

[21] History of Bengali Language, p. 793; Hindu Gods in Muslim Poetry, by Dinesh Chandra Sen, p. 25.

[22] K M. Sen, "Madhya Juge Bharater Sadhana."

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-25.

The great Chaitanya of Bengal (1484 A.D.) allowed both Hindus and Muhammadans to become his disciples. Yavan Haridas was one of his most important disciples. Rup and Sanatan, two of his important disciples, were so very tolerant to Muslim converts to Vaisnavism that the orthodox Vaisnavas and Hindus refused to have any social intercourse with them.

Ramanand, the great saint, ranks a Muhammadan weaver, Kabir, as his first disciple. He protested against caste and put faith in love of God above caste and rituals of religion. To him, "there is no question of caste and rank before God. He, who devotes himself to God, is God." Kabir was the personification of the process of Hindu-Muslim fusion in mediæval India. He attacked the orthodox Hindu institutions like "Tirtha" (pilgrimage) "Upabash" (fast), "Vrata" (rites), "Mala" (beads) and "Tilak" (marks).[24]

Kabir's great friend was saint Taqi of the Sahrwardi sect. His daughter Kamal was married to a Brahmin. When he was charged with apostacy before Sekandar Lodi, he defended himself by saying that his definite aim was to unite Hindus and Musalmans. His followers, Kabirpanthis, remember God along with their breath, in the manner of the Hindu Yogis. Even women were allowed to become his disciples and Gangabai was

[24] "Hindi-ke Musalman Kabi," p. 35. Some say that Kamal was a disciple of Kabir.

one of them. The great saints Ravidas and Namdeb were contemporaries of Kabir and were much influenced by him. Ravidas was a "Chamar," a cobbler, and his disciple was the Queen Jahli of Mewar.

Kabir was followed by Nanak; the former, on his death-bed, is said to have remarked that he would die in peace because Nanak would take his place. Nanak raised his voice of protest against idolatory, caste-system and communalism.[25]

[25] दुई जगदीश कहा ते आये कहु कौने भरमाया।
अल्ला राम करीम केशव हरि हजरत नाम धराया॥
वही महादेव वही मोहम्मद ब्रह्मा आदम कहिए।
कोई हिन्दू कोई तुरुक कहावै एक जमी पर रहिए॥
वेद किताव पढ़ै वे कुतवा वे मोलना वे पांडे।
विगत विगत के नाम धरायो यक माटी के मांडे॥
कहु कबीर वे दोनों भूले रामहि किनहु न पाया।
वे खसिया वे गाय कटावैं बादे जन्म गवांया॥

Tell me where did you get two Gods; who has led you astray? The same God is called differently Allah or Ram, Karim or Keshav, Hari or Hazrat.

The same God is called Mahadev, Muhammad, Brahma or Adam. Every one lives on the same earth, one is called Hindu, and the other Turk.

The first reads the Vedas, the second the Quran, one is called Pundit, the other is called Maulana.

They style themselves separately though they are pots of the same earth. Kabir says, both are mistaken; none has got Ram (God).

Macauliffe :—"He who worshippeth stones, visiteth places
Of pilgrimage, dwelleth in forests,
And renounceth the world, wandereth and wandereth,
How can his filthy mind become pure?"

His teachings were so liberal that, after his death, his Musalman disciples claimed his dead body for burial. Nanak's Japajis were more influenced by Hinduism than by the Dohas of Kabir. His Musalman disciples assert that he was initiated into mysticism by a Sufi saint, Sayid Hasan. He even visited Mecca on a pilgrimage. In Bagdad, his teachings have been embodied in Arabic and there stood for a long time Nanak's "Dargah" in that Islamic centre.

Dadu (1575 A.D.)[26] makes a definite attempt to combine the Hindus and Musalmans. Like Kabir, he consciously denounced pilgrimage, idolatry and outward symbols. Amongst his most important disciples were Sheikh Baharji, Bakarji and Rajjabji.

Even in the far distant land of Assam, there appeared a new cult called "Mahapurushia" founded by Shankardeo. It was more liberal than Vaisnavaism. Himself he was a Kayastha. He counted amongst his disciples a large number of Musalmans. To him "Temples" were fraud and "Prasad" hypocrisy. Their Gurus are not Brahmins.

Sanatan Goswami, a Hindu saint from Gaur, founded a new order called the Darweshia. The Darweshia cult is like that of the Vaisnavas and

[26] K. M. Sen says that Dadu was a Muslim and his original name is 'Dayood' which means 'devoted.'

Bauls. They wear beads called "Tasbih-mala" and put on the dress of Muslim faqirs called 'Alkalla.' Their songs contain the names of Allah, Khoda, Muhammad and of various saints.

The "Saini" sect show an extreme form of fusion of Hindu and Muslim faiths. They drink intoxicating liquors and wear beads round the neck, bangles on the wrist and observe the fast of Ekadasi, etc., but like Musalmans they eat beef. They bring their beads, called the "Khakshafa," from Mecca and the chain of beads is called "Sulimani beads." Their secret Mantra is "Pir sat hai" (the Guru is truth). They utter every day the following verse :—

برحق لا الٰه الا الله محمد رسول الله
دعا فقیر رحم الله، قدم درویش رد بلا
بهلا کر، بهلا هے، سودا کر، نفع هے
ساتهه دے اور ساتهه لے، الله نام کا سودا هے

The main feature of these Hindu teachers was a new outlook on religious quest. They sacrificed the forms and rituals which had formed the bedrock of the Hindu society since the time of Harsha. In almost all of them, we find a direct and eloquent protest against the ritualistic cult of Hinduism and a faith in the Almighty. The metaphysical aspect of the Hindus was combined with ethical aspect of the Semitics. The rigidity of their dogmas and the stress on their rituals were

much toned down by the onrush of these teachers, who came almost in a host. The literature of this period is full of Hindu ideas and thoughts. The Hindu poets who appeared in this period adopted the style of the Muslims; no less were Muslim writers saturated with Hindu thoughts. The Muslims even addressed themselves in Indian languages. Amir Khusrau not only followed the Indian style but he combined it with Sanskrit and Hindi : —

दो सखुना फारसी और हिन्दी

माशूक रा चे मी वायद कर्द } उत्तर
हिन्दुओं का रब कौन है ? } "राम"

جواب "رام" { معشوق را چه می باید کرد ؟
هندؤن کا رب کون ہے ؟

कूवते रूह चिस्त , } उत्तर
प्यारी को कब देखिए ? } "सदा"

جواب "سدا" { قوت روح چیست ؟
پیاري کو کب دیکھئے ؟

Amir Khusrau (13th century) was so liberal that he was sneered at by the orthodox Muslims as a worshipper of idols. He replied to his critics :—

کافر عشقم مسلمانی مرا درکار نیست
هر رگ من تار گشته حاجت زنار نیست

خلق میگویند که خسرو بت پرستی میکند
آرے ! آرے ! میکنم با خلق عالم کار نیست

" I am begotten of love, I need no Islam, I have sacred threads all through my veins, there is no need of any other threads.

" People say Khusrau worships the idols: of course I am doing this and I stand not in need of the peoples of the world."

In the poems of Kamal (1565 A.D.), we find the Hindu Prophets and Gods taking a definite place :—

राम के नाम सो काम पूरन भयो,
लक्ष्मण नाम तें लक्ष पायो।
कृष्ण के नाम सों वारि से पारभे,
विष्णु के नाम विश्राम आयो॥

" Ram's name has fulfilled all my desires; Lakshman's name has shown me my destination. By Krishna's name, I crossed the sea; in Vishnu's name, I find the peace of heart."

With the advent of Malik Muhammad Jaisi (1518 A.D.) Hindu allegory entered into the themes of the Muslim writers of Hindu poetry. The Hindu idea of transmigration of soul, and eternal synthesis of Atma and Paramatma, found expression in the famous allegorical treatises called the Padmavat. Here, under the allegory of the

struggle between Alauddin and the Rana of Chitor, is excellently depicted from the Hindu standpoint the struggle in a soul between the forces of good and evil. His other Hindi works are no less important. " Akharabat " is still regarded as a standard work of Hindi literature.

Rajjabji (1538-98) was a great disciple of the saint Dadu and was a follower of the Rama cult. He sang :—

रज्जब रहिए राम में, गुरू दादू के प्रसाद ।
नातर जाता देख तू, जनम अमोलक बादि ॥

By his time, quite a number of Muslims had definitely taken to the cult of Rama.

Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan, son of Bairam Khan, is one of the best cultural products of the age. His Hindi " Dohas " read like the outpourings of a great Vaishnava saint :—

ते रहीम मन आपनों कीन्हो चारु चकोर ।
निसि वासर लागो रहै कृष्ण चन्द्र की ओर ॥

" Oh ! Rahim, if you converted your mind into a beautiful Chakor, which day and night looks at the moon."

गहि शरणागत राम की भवसागर की नाव ।
रहिमन जगत उधार करि और न कछू उपाव ॥

" Oh ! Rahim, if you desire to cross this sea of life, there is no other way but the shelter of Ramachandra."

Rahim's love poems are specimens of a wonderful combination of Sanskrit and Hindi :—

शरद निशि निशीथे चांद की रोशनाई ।
सघन बन निकुंजे कान्ह बंसी बजाई ॥
रतिपति सुत निद्रा साइयां छोड़ भागी ।
मदन शिरसि भूयः क्या बला आन लागी ॥

" Kanu played on his flute in the midst of a dense grove, at the dead of a moonlit autumn night, I deserted cupid, son, sleep and my husband and ran away ; Oh God of Love, what a calamity has come upon my head again."

Rahim was a good scholar in Sanskrit and he is responsible for the translation of some astrological treatises. Let us quote from one of his Sanskrit poems of dedication :—

रत्नाकरोस्ति सदनं गृहिणो च पद्मा ।
किं देयमस्ति भवते जगदीश्वराय ॥
राधागृहीतमनसे मनसे च तुभ्यं ।
दत्तं मया निजमनस्तदिदं गृहाण ॥

" Ratnakar is your home; your spouse is Padma (Goddess of Fortune). What shall I give to thee, Oh lord of the world? Hence accept this my heart, as your heart is already taken by Radha."

The eclectic tendency of these Hindu teachers and Muslim litterateurs was very favourable for

the reception of the Muslim Sufi saints who had been making slow but steady progress towards the heart of Hinduism since their first advent in Sind (812 A.D.).

The origin, growth and development of Sufism in India is really a very interesting study. The Indian atmosphere, charged with its assimilative cosmic ideal and its Vedantic outlook, was very congenial to the growth of the Sufi ideas, and at the same time Islam, with its absence of metaphysics, its stern rigidity, clear commands and emphatic taboos was favourable to the birth of Sufism. Sufism is after all " an attitude of mind and heart toward God and problems of life which is as different from strictly orthodox Islam as Quakers are from Catholics." In course of time Sufis, by interpreting some verses of the Quran and some sayings of the Prophet, depersonalised Allah, the God of Mercy and Wrath, into an abstract idea under the title of Love and Truth. But these abstractions were replied to by terrible persecution as the orthodox refused to admit metaphysics into their citadel of Ethics. It is difficult to conjecture what would have been the trend of Islam—a religion almost bankrupt in Metaphysics—if it would not have come in touch with Aryan metaphysics in Persia or Greek intellectual abstractions in Yunan. The Aryan idea of receiving instructions through contact with a soul already illumined, permeated with Semitic Islam or, in other words, the doctrine of Pir-Murid (Master and Disciple),

permanently stuck its root into Islam in Persia. Hafiz went so far as to say, "Drown your pulpit into the wine if your Pir says so, for your guide knows the way and its destination."[27] The Sufis believe that the marvellous powers of the illumined soul may be brought to the use and advantage of the disciple. When the Muslims appeared in India through the north-western gates from Persia, they found that the Indian mind was already in consonance with Aryan thoughts akin to those in Persia and that a process of fusion had already begun. In Sind, the Muslim Saints—Chishti, Bahlol, Latiff, and Shah Baz—were making steady progress. In Northern India Kabir, Nanak, Raidas and Chaitanya had already softened the rigidity of Hinduism and the Muslim Saints and Sufis found ready response amongst the people of India. No less were the Muslims influenced by the Hindu Saints. In course of a century, the Sufis adopted the Hindu doctrine of "Guru-Shishya" (Master and Disciple) with all their technique of worship.

[27] Indian synonyms for Sufi terms. Dara Shukoh refers to similar synonyms : -

Sufi	English	Hindu
Zikr	... Meditation	... Dhyan
Hal	.. Ecstasy	. Samadhi
Tanasukh	. Transmigration	... Punarjanma
Nafs	. Control of nerves	... Nyas—Pranayam

'Shariat, Tariqat, Ma'rfat, Haqiqat' are equivalent to four stages of Hindu life - Annamay Kosh, Pranamay Kosh, Jnanamay Kosh, Hiranmay Kosh

Like a Hindu Yogi, a Sufi practises penance of body by standing in the sun, plunging in water, burning in fire.

By the 16th century, Sufi teachers divided themselves into various orders according to their individual religious experiences; in India there were as many as seventy-two sects (Bahatar Ferqa). The spirit of the age was very favourable to the development of the Sufi tendencies and orders in Islam. It was a belief amongst many Muslims that, after 1,000 years of Muhammad's advent, would appear Al-Mehdi who would "set disorders at right." By the time Akbar was in India, the cycle of 1,000 years had just been completed; volumes of literature had been written in all parts of Islam regarding the appearance of Al-Mehdi. Abdul Qadir Badauni says, in his Muntakhabut-Twarikh, that "questions of Sufism, scientific discussions, enquiries into philosophy and law were the order of the day." Many conflicting doctrines and interpretations were introduced and controversy among the religionists and commentators was characterised by bitterest feelings and uncharitable effusions. In and outside India many a claimant arose who professed themselves as the promised Messiah; to name a few only in India—Mir Sayid Muhammad of Jaunpur, Ruknuddin of Delhi, Sayid Ahmad of Guzrat, Shaikh Ali of Byana. The forces of this Mehdi movement gave a terrible shake to the orthodox Sunni interpretations of Islam and prepared the way for new doctrines to germinate. The movement was in another way in consonance with the spirit of the time in India. The old stereotyped interpretations would not fit in with

the expanding empire of Islam in the non-Muslim land of India—liberal interpretations and adaptations were the needs of the moment; without the spirit of a Mehdist the orthodox would be far too strong for any Muslim empire-builder in Hindusthan.

This move of Islam on a new quest was not an isolated movement—nor a sporadic growth. Just then, a wave was passing all over the world—both in the East and in the West. It is the nature of the world-thought movements that civilisations of a more or less similar stratum are effected consciously or unconsciously by common currents. In Europe, the intellectual sphere was pulsating with a new wave of scholasticism leading to the Renaissance. The search for the whys and wherefores of everything led to the famous system of Inductivism in the field of logic and enquiry; the quest of the old truth led to the rebirth of the old learning. The whole civilised world was in an intellectual travail. The Islamic world and the Indian mind were also recipients of the same thought-currents. The rise of Ramanand, Ravidas, Kabir, Chaitanya, Dadu, Mirabai and others on the one hand, and of Saber, Abu Ali Kalandar, Nizamuddin Awlia, Bahlol and others on the other, were in part due to the time force. Neo-Sufism and scholastic theology and repudiation of the orthodox interpretations of the Hadis and the Quran are but the different features of the same movement or their reactions. In India, the scholastics and spiritualists were all "putting the

world to flames." The mind of young Abul Fazl was not satisfied with the learning he had in India. He intended to move to Laban, Tibet, Bagdad "in quest of goods" for his ever-expanding intellect. Badauni compares him to "a man who, having a light in his hand and not knowing what to do, came out into the street in the day-time." Indeed the scholastics, by the light of their intellect, "made a day of a night and a night of a day." Akbar appearing in that age in the midst of the scholastic environments during the process of cultural fusion, was but the natural product of the spirit of the time and not a mere accident.

CHAPTER II

THE CENTRAL ASIAN BACKGROUND

The birth of Akbar marks the consummation of the process of unification in the two greatest houses of Central Asia, those of Chengiz Khan and Timur-Lang. Akbar combined in him all that was best in the two of the greatest men of Central Asia in the middle ages. Chengiz Khan, apparently known in history as the scourge of God and man, was not altogether devoid of finer elements in his nature. Without entering into a justification or vindication of Chengiz Khan, it may be stated that, in religion, he gives the lie to the popular conception of the great conqueror. In religious belief, Chengiz was a Shaman.[1] "He

[1] "Shaman" is possibly a loose form of Buddhist "Shramana" which means a monk, though Encyclopedia of Religions, Vol. XI, p 441, suggests that "Shaman" is derived from native Tungus name for priest or medicine man Though originally Buddhist, Shamans have deviated so much from the religion of Buddha, that one hardly finds any similarity between the two "Idols are worshipped in this form of religion but its special feature is the influence of the Shamans (or priests). These persons differ not very greatly from African rain-doctors. They practise astrology to have communication with demons and familiars. Their main power lies in the fact that they pretend to have information from the unseen world as to those who are about to cause misfortune in the future" (Kennedy, Vol I, p. 14.). The Shaman foretells the future and declares the will of God ; when he awakens (from his trance under the spell of incantation or herbs), he remembers nothing of what has passed. Rythmic songs, prayers and adorations are used by the Shamans in the Kalwamic.

believed in God but not in dogma, respected all religions and was often present at all religious ceremonies of his subjects, for, from the state point of view, he found it useful that the people under his authority should give evidence of their faith in God."[2] After the conquest of Iran, Chengiz brought some learned men to his court, and asked them for information on the doctrine of Islam. He did not find it inferior to any other religion he knew, but denounced pilgrimage to Mecca as useless, saying that the whole world is the house of God and that prayers reach him from everywhere.[3] Howorth, in his history of the Mughals, says, "Justice, tolerance, discipline, virtues that make up the modern ideal of a state, were taught and practised at his court."[4] In keeping with his contemporary usages, Chengiz was absolutely careless of human lives; "he had a general belief that all religions had more or less truth and more or less untruth in them."[5] "The body that is born is immortal. It goes hence without home or resting place."[6]

This spirit of free-thinking is a common trait in the family of the Mughals of Central Asia, "they are not fettered by any belief, restrictions of

2 Felix Vayle, Islamic Culture, Hyderabad, Vol. I, 1927, p 17

3 *Ibid*, p. 18

4 Howorth gives a fine description of the Mughals in their original home.

5 Kennedy, History of the Mughals, Vol. I, p. 13.

6 Howorth, Vol. I, p 104

dogmas."[7] An eclectic spirit pervaded the whole family of Chengiz. "They took part equally in Christian (of the Nestorian form), Muhammadan and Buddhist services."[8] Howorth describes a scene of Mangu Khan's court in which "Christian services were performed."[9] "On one feast day, Mangu Khan's chief wife and her children entered the Nestorian Chapel, kissed the right hand of the saints, and then gave her right hand to be kissed according to the fashions of the Nestorians. Mangu also was present and with his spouse sat down on the gilt throne before the altar."

Even Hulaku Khan, who is said to have killed eight hundred thousand men at Bagdad, protected the tomb of Ali at Kerbela.[10] They were liberal enough to employ Christian generals and mercenaries. Though they carried the message of death and destruction in whatever direction they turned their eyes, still "they carried to and brought from those lands, all the knowledge they could command." A spirit of inquiry was a native instinct in them. "Though not an originative people," says H. G Wells, "yet as transmitters of knowledge and method their influence upon world's history has been enormous."[11] Kublei

7 Howorth, Vol. I, p. 202.

8 Kennedy, Vol. I, p. 27

9 Howorth, Vol I, p. 190

10 Kennedy, Vol. I, p 30.

11 Outlines of the History of the World by H. G. Wells, gives a fine description of the Mongol culture.

Khan, grandson of Chengiz, sent to the Pope, in 1269, a mission with evident intentions of finding some common mode of action with the Western kingdom. He asked that one hundred men of learning and ability should be sent to his court to establish an understanding. Here was an opportunity for the Popes to fulfil their ambition of converting the great Mughals to their faith for which attempts had been previously made. But when Kublei asked for some men of knowledge, they failed to utilise the opportunity, for papacy was then at its worst and struggling for existence. The two friars sent were unequal to the task. The attempts made by the Nestorians and Catholics proved abortive. Inspired by the great Chinese sage, Chu-Tsi, Kublei Khan, the Mongol, accepted a Chinese name, for he was an Emperor of China. He gave a wonderful tone to the Shamanic cult. "He began to respect the religion and culture of the conquered and did not believe in the cultural superiority of the victors. He was kind to the learned, to the artists and poets, and gave them shelter, irrespective of their religion and tradition. He completely identified himself with the interest of his subjects. The efforts of Kublei to revive Chinese agriculture, his great struggle against famine, his financial laws—he ordered the printing of bank-notes—and his works of charity deserve admiration of all generations. The Chinese historians recognise that this

descendant of the greatest swordsman was their greatest ruler."[12]

If Kublei was great as a ruler of Chinese soil, he was greater still as a ruler of Chinese soul. To decide what was the best among the religions of the people, he called a council of the wise men of all beliefs.[13] Thus came the Muslim divines, Buddhist Shamans, Christian theologians to the Imperial Court and we possess a very fascinating record of their discussions in the writings of Rubrukis, the ambassador of Saint Louis, King of France.[14] The Christian Gospels were asked to be translated. Mati-Dhwaja, the great Lama, was at his court and was afterwards honoured with the seat of the Tibetan Dalai Lama. A great Lama, named Shakya Pandit[15] from Tibet (probably of Indian origin), went over to his court, and is said to have delivered three lectures on Buddhism ; he ultimately convinced Kublei of the greatness of the teachings of Buddha and was accepted as the 'Phagspa' (or preceptor). The 'Phagspa' is credited with having invented a new alphabet for the use of Kublei's empire, combining

12 Felix Vayle, Islamic Culture, Vol. I, p. 19.

13 In China, Kublei had a precedent in Tai-Sing who called a similar council to decide the merits of Neostrian Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Laotzeism. Beginning from Asok, we find, "Religious conferences follow one upon the other at the court of the Asiatic rulers in search of a means of reconciling the different doctrines."—Felix Vayle.

14 Guillamme Baucher, a Persian, and Eaquette de-Metz, a French lady, are also mentioned in this connection

15 Sanskrit "Shiksh," Chinese Po-se-pa, Bhaspa and Phagspa; Acharya, meaning "preceptor."

the script of the Chinese, Mongols and Zoroastrians.[16] This spirit of enquiry, a tendency to free-thinking and absence of a steady religious background are mainly responsible for the changes of beliefs in the Mughal tribes in different parts of Asia. The Mughals in China adopted Buddhism ; in South Russia and Western Turkistan, they embraced Islam ; in Kipchak, though Muslim by profession, they still retain most of their earlier traces of Shamanism. The Mughals of Ukraine reverted to Christianity, forming the Cossacks—nomad half-civilised tribes in Russia and Poland The pliability of the Mughals to some extent continued even when they reached India after two hundred years of their stay in Islamic environments. If they had not embraced Islam before they came to India, they might as well have accepted the religion of India with all its merits and demerits.

The same spirit characterises the paternal line of Akbar. The early Turks who accepted Islam, made it a condition precedent that, even when Muslims, they would not part with wine and would not kill cows [17] \ By no means was their profession of Islam orthodox.\ Timur-Lang was so wonderful a personality that a thousand and one fascinating fables grew around him and he is

[16] For a discussion on this script, see the article on the alphabet of Phagspa in Asia"Major - Kennedy, Vol I, p 34.

[17] Sachau's Introduction to Alberuni.

depicted in most diverse lights according to the temperament of the authors. He is claimed as an orthodox Sunni, and no less a Shia ; some credit him to be a Gazi ; others shun him as a Schismatic ; he is hated in Europe as a scourge of God and men. He is cursed by others as a pagan too. And there is more or less truth in every one of the epithets applied to him.

His conquest extended from the Mediterranean to the Ganges and from Pekin to Moscow. His history has been written by the vanquished, and certainly the spirit of venom, which the vanquished bore against the victor, has entered into their writings.[18] The Sunni Musalmans, whom he practically destroyed in Bagdad and Allepo, never accepted him as an orthodox Musalman and he was looked down upon by the Khalifas and Ulama as a pagan. He did not feel much reverence for Mecca. Even after the conquest of the Khelafat, Sayids refused to regard him as a monarch of Islam.[19] In his communications, he never styled himself a monarch of Islam, which is invariably the custom with orthodox Muhammadans. He styled himself, " I, Timur, a servant of God." He never changed his hereditary name

[18] Harold Lamb, "Tamerlane—the Earth Shaker," a well-known work on Timur. Zafarnama, written by Sarafuddin Ali, under the patronage of the Timurids, is full of flattery. Ajaib-ul-Moqdur fi Akhbar-i-Timur by Ahmad bin Abbas Shah is full of venom, and is not trustworthy.

[19] Harold Lamb has thrown interesting sidelights on Timur's religion.

"Amir Taimur Gurgan."[20] He never scrupled to destroy the Khalifa and had the Khutba read in his name. He did not even hesitate to assume the title of Khalifat-ul-lillah to pose as the greatest commander of the faithful, vindicating the superiority of Timurid arms to those of Abbassids. He gladly employed Christians as his envoys to different contemporary courts. The claim of his panegyrists that he was an orthodox Sunni Musalman is not tenable. The circumstances which drew his profession of the Sunni creed, were purely political. Fariduddin Bey, in his famous work, Mustahat-i-Sultanat,[21] states the occasion of his declaration of the Sunni creed. Yusuf of Khaput, flying from the wrath of Timur, sought shelter at the court of Bayezid of Turkey. To Timur's demand for surrender Bayezid gave an evasive reply by introducing irrelevant reflections on his faith and orthodoxy. This step drew from Timur a great profession of Sunni orthodoxy against the faith of Bayezid. The altercation ended in the famous battle of Angora in 1402 and in the death of Bayezid. Then followed the vindication of his orthodoxy in Rum, when the Ottoman Turks had to acknowledge his supremacy and accord to

[20] Amir wears a commander's crest which is hereditary in his family. Gurgan means a son-in-law and it refers to his ancestor Nuyun Karachar's marriage with a daughter of the family of Changiz Khan. See Abul Fazl, Vol. III, p. 204.

[21] Published from Constantinople, 1274 A.H.

him the title of Khalifat-ul-lillah. The pretension of Khalifat-ul-lillah continued in the house of Timur till the end of their dynasty in 1857 after the Sepoy Mutiny.[22]

Musalman or no Musalman—believer or non-believer—to him, every one, who dared challenge his supremacy, was to be put to the sword. The speeches which Timur delivered on the eve of his expeditions were always more political than religious.[23] The peculiarity is that all his wars were fought against the Islamic countries except against Georgia and India (where the reigning monarch was a Muhammadan though the population was mostly Hindu). Professions of orthodoxy suited those conquerors best, for religious susceptibility is easily touched and, when inflamed, it works wonders. To us, it seems strange that he believed himself to be an agent of God on earth and that it was the commission of God on him to conquer the world.[24] To oppose him was to go against the command of God. He would not believe like a Shia that the Khelafat belonged to the family of the Prophet

[22] Parliamentary speeches in the House of Commons on the Sepoy Mutiny, referred to in the Leicester University Lecture, 1924 (Islamic Section).

[23] 'Institutes of Timur' gives a clue to his mind.

[24] A similar belief is ascribed to the Mughals in general that God created two worlds and kept heaven for himself and gave this earth to his son, Chengiz. The great conqueror of Thebes believed that he was the son of Zeus. The great Corsican thought himself to be guided by the unseen hand of Destiny. Kaiser Wilhelm felt a similar Divine urge.

nor would he associate, like a Sunni, the Khelafat with the suzerainty of Ka'ba. It would be an irony of circumstances for the man who did not in the least hesitate to build twenty turrets of heads of believers in Allepo and Damascus [25] to pose as the champion of true Faith and to attempt at the conversion of the land of non-believers. To Timur, ambition was his guiding star, blood was his delight, success was his joy. Timur's intrepid Turki instinct, with its insatiable thirst for blood, could only be appeased with blood.

But Timur the man is drowned in the midst of Timur the conqueror. Below the blood of the Turk and Mughal that ran in his veins, flowed a current of the mystic in him. Behind the turrets of 70,000 human skulls, behind the graves of 4,000 human beings buried in Armenia, behind the wall of 2,000 Shaikhs of Seistan, Timur the man is lost sight of. " His anecdotes have been calumniated by vituperation of the chroniclers of Persia and Byzantium whom he had defeated." [26] They failed to see that Timur " was as prone as any medieval catholic, wherever he found a shrine, to pray at it, asking protection from the dead saint who might be buried there. [27] They failed to decipher in the midst of the ashes of destruction that Timur's order was to save colleges and hospitals.

[25] E. G. Browne, Literary History of Persia, p. 160.

[26] Felix Vayle, Islamic Culture, Vol. I, 1927.

[27] Kennedy, Vol. I, p. 76.

Every evening after the turmoils of the war were over, he called the group of the pious and the learned men and had discussions with them, which he prized much." [28] The bloody Timur spent most of his hours in "talk with green-turbanned holy men who had visited the Shrines of Islam and gained sanctity thereby." [29] Bin Arab Shah says that he used to have books read to him every evening.

Timur tells us in his Institutes [30] ; "Every kingdom which I reduced, I gave back the government of that kingdom to the prince thereof, and I bound him in chains of kindness and generosity ; I drew them into obedience and submission. The refractory I overcome by their own devices, and I appoint over them a vigorous, sagacious and upright governor." This version exactly fits in with the spirit of Timur. To the refractory, he was a veritable instrument of destruction; to the submissive he was all bountiful. Before a conquest, he planted himself outside the city, raised a white flag as a sign of peace inviting submission ; if submission was not tendered, a red flag was hoisted, intimating the death of the nobles; if yet submission was not tendered, black flag would fly as a signal for the burial of the city ; and on the Dark Horses would gallop to the enemy's city with unvarying consequences.

[28] For a detailed description, see Institutes of Timur, Vol. II, Davy's edition.

[29] Harold Lamb, Tamerlane, p. 21.

[30] Institutes of Timur, Vol. II, (Davy's Trans.).

One can only wonder how this conqueror, in the midst of his universal pillage, plunder and destruction, could care to take with him the learned, even in his campaigns.

To him, the Shaikhs were as much a necessity as the soldiers. In war, the place of the learned was assigned at the farthest and safest corners—certainly not a happy compliment to them. His regard for the Shaikhs and Ulama was too universally known. In the destruction of Bagdad, so famous in history, so notorious for its cruelties, he spared the learned. This peculiar personality of Timur the Terrible and Timur the Mystic is indeed an interesting study. A mystic regard for Darweshes and Saints and an admiration for the learned went hand in hand with the cold-blooded disregard of human life.

Shah Rukh (1304-47) was interesting, though in another way. "He desired not to extend," says Sir Malcolm, "but to repair the ravages committed by his father." This prince also encouraged men of science and learning and his court was splendid." [31] "In brief, the empire founded by Timur was refined by the efforts of Mirza Shah Rukh, who during a long period busied himself in repairing the devastation wrought by his predecessor.....It is an extraordinary fact that the son of one so hard-hearted should be so kindly, amiable,

[31] Malcolm, "History of Persia," Vol. I, p. 487.

gracious and friendly to learning, showing favour and courtesy to all, specially to scholars and men of parts." Abdul Qadir of Muraghah the musician, Queyamuddin the architect and engineer, Maulana Khalid the painter, adorned his court. [32] "On Friday and Monday evenings," says Muazzam Bashi, "he used to assemble those who knew the Quran by heart and caused them to recite the entire scripture in his presence."

By-sundar, son of Shah Rukh, was a great patron of learning. Poets, artists, scholars and painters found a lord bountiful in him. They came from Iraq, Fars, Azar-baijan and from all parts of Asia.

Ulagh, another son of Shah Rukh, built at Samarkand his famous observatory and compiled the famous astronomical tables known as Zich-i-Ulagh Beg.

"The Timurids were no barbarians," says Dr. F. R. Martin,[33] "indeed everything goes to show that they were highly civilised and refined men, real scholars, loving art for the sake of art alone without ostentation. In the intervals between their battles, they enjoyed thinking of their libraries, and writing poetry, many of them having composed poetry that far excels that of their poets." By-sundar was the founder of the most elegant

[32] "The miniature painting and painters of Persia, India and Turkey," by F. R. Martin.

[33] Turkhi, Trans. by Farughi, p. 266-67.

style of book production in Persia, well deserved to be remembered as one of the greatest bibliophiles of the world."

Abu Sayid Mirza sought "enlightenment from Darwesh and ascetic." [34]

Omar Shaikh, father of Babar, "had a great liking for the poets and could recite poetry. He had a poetical temperament but was not solicitous of writing verses, spent most of his time in reading books, historical and poetical. The Shahnama was often recited before him and he was an excellent companion." [35] He had a great respect for Darweshes and Saints and often would sit at their feet for wisdom.

His son, Babar, is indeed one of the most romantic personalities of mediæval Asia. He combined in him the blood of two great houses—of Chengiz Khan and of Timur-Lang.[36] Left to the tender mercies of his unkind tribesmen, he had to defend his patrimony at Fargana against enemies which included, amongst others, his own uncle. The Sunni Khalifa claimed his allegiance as he was a Musalman.[37] The Shia King of Persia demand-

[34] Abul Fazl, Vol. III, p. 216

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 218-19.

[36] Babar's father, Omar Shaikh, married the sister of Muhammad Khan, a regular descendant of Chogtai Khan, the head of Chogtai branch of Timurid house. For the genealogy of Muslim Kings, Lane-Poole is excellent.

[37] For Khelafat pretensions on Muslims, see Hughes, Dictionary of Islam.

ed his obedience as the lord of the land under his suzerainty. Tossing like a wave in the midst of the stormy sea, he dashed six times against the shores of his patrimony at Fargana and was six times swept out of it. It really passes the imagination of an ordinary man how, in the midst of the vicissitudes and turmoils of his life, he could maintain an equanimity of spirit, sufficient for composing couplets or for reciting them. In him the intrepid spirit of a Mongol was softened by the mystic element of a Turk; he was as much an orthodox Musalman as an apostate. Though punctual at his prayers, strict in observance of formalities of family customs, religion without magic and divination had but little influence over him. Babar had, in his religious beliefs, many elements to which an orthodox Musalman would seriously object. The political necessity which drew from Timur his profession of orthodox Sunnism (in answer to Bayezid's reproach),[38] was equally responsible for making Babar profess Shia doctrine of Shah Ismail. As a mark of his respect to his orthodox Shia suzerain, Babar had to accept Shia-i-Taj,[39] though "friend" was the term applied to indicate their relation.[40] He struck coins bearing the Shia texts immediately on his arrival in India. Babar struck coins bearing the names of the first four Khalifas

38 See Buckler's lecture in the Leicester University, 1924.

39 Shia-i-Taj—customary cap worn by a Shia.

40 Buckle's lecture on Mahzar of 1579.

and the Khutba was read in his name. The general character of the religious convictions of the Timurid family is excellently depicted by Pringle Kennedy in his famous work "The History of the Great Moghuls." One great factor of the Mughal character is that "he was not in his native steppes so bound up in his religion as other races...The native of Central Asia, though he had his omens and dreams, his witches and witchcrafts, lived on the whole free from much religious restraints. Nor has his Islamism caused him to be much more bound. He had accepted the Muhammadan creed, but only very partially the Muhammadan social system which accompanied it, and his life has retained as its basis much of the social law of the steppes." Babar and Humayun were never happier in their palaces than in their camps and the forests.[41]

Babar hardly followed the Sunni orthodox social system which is a part of the Islamic creed; he enjoyed the prerogative of social freedom. He enjoyed wine cups as much as any other of his family—an enjoyment strictly prohibited.[42] Submission to Shia creed was enforced by political necessity while in Persia, and renouncement of the same and striking of the coins bearing the names of

[41] Kennedy, Vol. I, pp. 12-29.

[42] Sultan Ali Mirza, one of his ancestors, drank for 20 to 30 days continuously. Blochmann, p. 58. Timur's wife drank wine openly; a Christian ambassador (Sanjak) was present in such a party.—Davy's Institute.

the first four Khalifas, were due to the same motive." Religion seems to have had anything but a powerful influence upon him save indeed as regards submission to the will of God and belief in the efficacy of prayer.

Humayun in point of religion was no better and no worse than his father, Babar. Though he was under the influence of a saint, he accepted the Shia-i-Taj, and wore the Khelat (robe of honour) offered by the Shia King of Persia. He went so far as to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of a Shia saint at Ardbil in north-western Persia near the Caspian Sea. His change of the title of Sultanate of Hindusthan to "Masnad-i-imarat," smacks of a complete surrender to Persian influence.[43] If his father had steeped himself in wine, Humayun fumed himself with the smoke of opium. Love of books, association with the learned men, and visits to tombs and saints—the characteristics of his line were all present in him. His death from a fall from the steps of his library at Delhi is an eloquent testimony to his love of study.

In short, a spirit of cultural eclecticism, almost unfettered by the limitations of Islam, though they had accepted it 150 years before, existed in the two great houses of Central Asia from which the Chogtai family of India traced their descent. They

[43] Humayun also venerated 'Light' and his alleged apostacy has been discussed by Dr. Tripathi in his "Some Aspects of Muslim Administration," p. 116.

continued their old social system, with love of Shamanic customs, their love for literature and literary men, with their drinking bouts and with their cruel propensities and disregard of human lives. The Torah of Chengiz Khan was still quoted, and when necessary, put into practice. The kettledrum and horse tails were still the signs of the dignity of a Chogtai.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, so far as India was concerned, a tendency towards a fusion and *rapprochement* between Hindu and Muslim cultures, was already in evidence. The Sufi teachers were then in possession of the field, the Hindu saints had prepared the soil, and seeds of eclecticism, partly conscious and partly unconscious, had been sown. The time was ripe for the advent of a great man and a great ruler who would co-ordinate the jarring elements of the two. The priest appeared in 1542 in the desert of Amarkot in Sind, that cradle of Sufis wherefrom had sprung for the last 400 years myriads of saints. He was born of a mother who had behind her a great legacy of the culture of Transoxiana. [11] in the house of a Hindu Raja who, out of pity, had given shelter to Humayun. It was no mere accident but a phenomenon, associated with a love for the Hindus which the great Emperor manifested.

[11] Hamida Banu belonged to a very old and cultured family of Transoxiana.

CHAPTER III

THE PENDULUM OSCILLATES

After many a trial and a change, Humayun recovered the throne of Delhi in 1555, at Sarhind, the legacy of Timur-Lang. Out of the clutches of the Shah of Persia, the father and son breathed freely. But the span was short ; before young Akbar had time to accommodate himself to the new environments, he was called upon, at the early age of fourteen, to perform the huge task of governing India, as yet a land of uncertainty for the family of Timur, with enemies open and secret. Any moment he might have to share the fate of his grandfather at Fargana or of his father in India. But through courage and fortitude and with assistance of the iron hand of Bairam Khan, he surmounted the troubles at the battle of Panipat in 1556.[1] But even after Panipat, the throne had so many thorns by its side that it was impossible for anybody to stay there without being pricked. The position of the Delhi Government was not at all encouraging. Kashmir was independent. The Rajput Chiefs of Central India were not only

[1] The first glimpse of the greatness of Akbar was shown in his refusal to strike Hemu : " How can I strike a man who is as good as dead."—Lane-Poole, Mediæval India, p. 241.

The argument of Smith that Akbar killed Hemu, is not convincing. —Smith's Akbar, the Great Mogul, p. 39; Tarikh-i-Afghana, E & D., Vol. V, p. 48.

independent, they were waiting for an opportunity to strike at the Empire. Guzrat and Malwa were being ruled by a Muhammadan dynasty. The Bahmani and the Vijayanagar Kingdoms paid little heed to the Delhi Government. In the east, the Kararani and Lohani Afghans controlled Bengal, Behar and Orissa, owing but a nominal allegiance to the Delhi authority. The Shah of Persia still looked upon Akbar and Bairam as his deputies and claimed suzerainty. A firman of condolence contained direct references to these Imperial pretensions. All were watching the course and development of events at the centre from where the boy Emperor's ejection was considered only a question of days and months. But Bairam, a friend of Humayun in his extremity, fully justified himself as the guardian of his friend's son, though in the end possibly his Tartar spirit made him stretch out for the throne of India.[2] But Akbar was not unequal to the task; with an acumen and judgment hardly to be expected in a boy of his age, he managed the ugly situation with astute skill. Maham Anaga, who had organised the conspiracy in the harem for the fall of Bairam, put her infamous son Adam Khan at the forefront, herself pulling the wires of intrigue from behind the veil. Bairam's absence raised cupidity in the breasts

[2] Smith is of opinion that Bairam was honourable enough not to contest the throne of Hindustan. He lays the whole blame at the door of Maham Anaga.

of the refractory Chiefs and Jagirdars and even of generals and kinsmen. Akbar could not make out whom to believe and whom not to believe. It was indeed a hard task for anybody—with the tradition of his father and grandfather having been turned out of their respective patrimonies in Samarkand and Hindustan, with no Bairam to lead the armies to victory, and Akbar as yet within his teens. Akbar had a trying time indeed; one defeat would immediately be the occasion for simultaneous revolts in all parts of Hindustan; one undiplomatic move might cost him the loyalty of his own Turki followers; one step to the left might bring him face to face with currents that would sweep him away—nobody knew where. He became convinced that the Afghans could hardly reconcile themselves to subordination to the youthful Emperor who belonged to a different race and with whom they had no link of tradition. The Turko-Mongol free-lancers, who had followed his grandfather, were hardly willing to follow the lead of the puny kingling. There was little possibility of forming a solid block of the Musalmans against the infidels. The first wave of the invaders' religious zeal had ebbed away by this time. They were as much disunited as the Hindus had been during the days of their first appearance in India. Fortunately for him, there was as little chance of his enemies making a common cause against him: each wanted to be great and independent. The

force of disunion was working everywhere. Thus the very number of his adversaries made the task of overcoming them one by one easy for Akbar. He thought of playing against the jealous Musalmans with the help of the valiant and much wronged Hindus. Babar's instruction to Humayun on the eve of his Indian expedition were still very fresh in his mind [3]:—

"O, my Son, People of diverse religion inhabit India .. It, therefore, behoves you that ....

You should not allow religious prejudice to influence your mind, and administer impartial justice, having regard to the religious susceptibilities and religious customs of all sections of the people.

You should in particular refrain from the slaughter of cows.....

You should never destroy places of worships of any community.....

The propagation of Islam will be better carried on with the faith of love and obligation than with the sword of supression."

There was before him a leaf out of the political philosophy of his great predecessor, Sher Shah. Sher Shah's government had acknowledged the desirability of giving an orientation to the objective of Muslim rule in India. That great Indo-Afghan was the consummated link of history between the untrimmed Turko-Afghans and the civilised Turko-Mughals of India. He was the embodiment and an expression of the assimilative forces that had

3 State Library MSS. of Bhopal.

for long been progressively Indianising the Muslim newcomers. In him had blossomed forth all that was best among the pre-Akbar Musalmans of India. He had enunciated and practised a new principle of political philosophy for them in India, which recommended them to go beyond the orthodox interpretations of the Shariat and to accommodate themselves with the unbelievers in the government of India which was mostly infidel. The fact of importance about this son of Sasaram Jagirdar is not that there was a large Hindu element in the ranks of his soldiery, nor is it that the chief of them was a Hindu; nor is it that he started separate inns for the Hindus and the Musalmans; it is that the spirit of his administration was Indian instead of being either Hindu or Muslim. The spirit of his administration was essentially—and not unavowedly—Indian or "Hindustani." The fundamental assimilativeness of the soil, which had received into the vast ocean of its thought and discipline successive streams of foreign invaders like the Kushans, the Huns, the Sakas in the ancient past, was long operating upon the crusaders of the Crescent by force of arms and governmental pressure. India achieved what Persia had not. Sher made the Musalmans Indians. Sher took a long time making it—for the most part in that subtle unconscious way which history has repeatedly shown to be characteristically India's own.

By the time of Akbar, long contact with the unbending Hindus had made the Musalmans give up much of their zeal and heart for proselytisation. Community of political and economic interests was gradually asserting its inevitable superiority over differences of faith between the idolators and the iconoclasts.

The establishment of the great central Asian dynasty beyond India had seriously disturbed the supply of soldiers in India, so that the Indian Sultans had increasingly to requisition the services of the Hindus. Constant Mongolo-Turkish invasions during the Slave hegemony and during the Khilji and the Toghluq periods had made for a wholesome union of political interests between the Hindus and the Musalmans against Timur. Hindus and Muhammadans had fought shoulder to shoulder for the defence of the Sultanate. The Chogtai invasion indeed had driven Muslims into the arms of the Hindus. The necessity of the hour agreed with the process of the history; a *rapprochement* was inevitable in consequence. Thus we see, in the Deccan, when a conspiracy was set on foot in the Bahmani Kingdom against Mahmud Gawan for being a foreigner, the Hindus joined hands with the Muslims to fight the foreign element. The political disturbances following the Chogtai invasion and the consequent rise of petty chieftainships, brought the Hindus into prominence. That the Hindus did

not make any serious attempt to found a Hindu Empire is explained by the fact, amongst others, that the Hindus did not look upon themselves as a separate political entity and were willing to make common cause with the Muhammadan brethren. The idea of a common Hindu-Muslim rule was the dream of Sher Shah ; but unfortunately he came to the throne of Hindustan in the evening of his life, and lived to rule only for five years. Adil Shah, though devoted more to the culture of Hindu music than to the affairs of state, had good sense of handing over the charge of his government to the care of an able Hindu, Hemchandra by name. Indeed, in the defence of the Sur dynasty, the services of this Hindu general of a Muslim ruler were invaluable.

By the time Akbar came to the throne of Delhi, the Hindu element in the Muslim administration had become a permanent factor. In social life, many of the beliefs of the Hindus had invaded the Muslim citadel—some of those being directly against the teachings of the Muslim religion. Hindu astrology, divination, magic, so much decried by the Prophet, were believed in by them. "The miracles of the Yogis were related by the orthodox writers with as perfect a coviction as could have been given to those in the Quran ; witchcraft was universally believed ; omens and dreams were paid the greatest attention to."[1] Even Humayun had fashioned his audience

[1] Elphinstone, p. 476, 9th edition.

hall according to the Hindu manner[5]: it had seven rooms named according to the seven stars. He used those rooms according to the influence of the stars. The visitors were allowed to use those rooms according to the influence of the stars on their life. Culturally, socially and politically there was going on a process of fusion.

To Akbar, an enemy, be he a Hindu or a Muslim, was an enemy of the state and he dealt with him as such. A defeated foe, be he a Hindu or a Muslim—an enemy who had submitted—engaged his greatest consideration. The practice was laudable in a land where Balban's punishment of Tughral Beg of Bengal, where Alauddin's philosophy of exterminating the whole family for the fault of one rebel,[6] were still fresh in the minds of men. The gift of a Khelat or a throne instead of death to a vanquished antagonist might well have amazed the Turko-Afghans. The magnanimity of this young Emperor sprang more from his nature than from his policy. Before he was twenty, he abolished the Jezia and the pilgrim tax. The punishment of Adam Khan after his misbehaviour with the family of Baz Bahadur of Malwa and the execution of Pir Muhammad left a

5 Rampran Gupta, "Mughal Rajbansha. p. 106" :—
(a) the "moon-chamber" for poets, travellers, ambassadors;
(b) the "mars-chamber" for religious law-givers and administrators;
(c) the "mercury-chamber" for warriors and soldiers, etc.

6 Elphinstone, p. 372.

very deep impression on the vanquished that justice could be expected even against the most powerful noble of the court. Liberality, justice and paternalism became the spirit of the age. This liberalism in politics expanded the mind of the Emperor which in future became congenial to the growth and expression of liberalism in religion. His birth in a Hindu house, the sweetness of his Hindu consorts[7] in the harem, the faithful services of his Hindu generals abroad, and the beautiful episode of the Rani of Wan Sal[8] when she accepted Humayun as her brother, left an indelible impression on his mind. He became convinced that the finer elements of humanity might be found even amongst the non-believers.

The early life of Akbar in that beautiful land of culture, Persia, had expanded his mind ; her glorious monarchs, and the constant changes of her political history had filled his mind. The Shia tendencies of the land of Persia silently penetrated into him.[9] His early Shia teachers had brought his mind to the better side of the Persian culture by their teachings in the poems of the Persian mystics. The influence of Shah Abdul Latif and his lesson in Sulh-i-kul[10] were never lost upon him. They

[7] For the wives of Akbar, see Najatur Rashid and Rampran Gupta's Mughal Rajbansha, p. 178

[8] Sind and its Sufis, by J. P. Gulraj, p. 41.

[9] Can we not trace a little Shia influence in giving his sons the names Hasan and Husain—the heroes of the Shias?

[10] Sulh-i-kul means peace with all.

had broadened his mind to a sufficient extent and traces of Persian influences on Akbar's later life were amply manifest.

Along with his liberal political instinct and liberal Shia tendencies, the peculiar traits of saint worship and tomb pilgrimage, which characterise the Timurids and Mongols of Central Asia,[11] find their expression in Akbar. On the eve of the battle of Chittor, he promised a pilgrimage to the tomb of saint Ma'in-ud-din Chishti of Ajmer, should he be vouchsafed victory.[12] After the victory of Chittor, he actually walked a distance of 220 miles to fulfil his vow and to show his gratefulness to benign God and Saint. The mystic in Akbar would often compel him " to seek loneliness where he would chant for the whole night the praises of God," " Ya Hu," " Ya Hadi."[13] " By nature, Akbar was contemplative "; in Badauni, we read of " the Emperor sitting on a stone lost in meditation." Abul Fazl tells us that, once in 1557, Akbar "felt constrained by the presence of a short-sighted man and began to chafe, he rode off and, dismounting, assumed the posture of communing with God." This was while Akbar was only 14 years old. In 1561, when he was aged about 20 only, he said, " from the lack of spiritual provisions for the last

[11] *Vide ante*, Ch. II, pp. 36-37.

[12] Babar, on the eve of his battle with Rana Sang, asked his soldiers to make a vow with their hands on the Quran.

[13] Sufi mode of remembrance (Zikr). See *ante*, Chap. I, p. 22, and Badauni, Lowe, Vol. II, pp. 202-04.

journey, my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow."[14] This event occurred long before he came in contact with the Sufi brothers. In his element, his ever-expanding soul was ever crying for an expansion and enlargement.

Akbar was 22 years of age when his twin sons, Hasan and Husain, died. He was anxious to have a son and paid visits to the shrines of saints at Ajmer and elsewhere, for the purpose. Salim Chishti, a saint at Fatehpur, blessed him and promised him one, and soon after his Hindu consort Jodhabai, daughter of Behari Mal, conceived. Akbar sent the imperial consort to the Khanqah[15] of Salim Chishti and placed her in the care of the saint where a male child was safely delivered. The child was named Salim after the name of the saint through whose grace the child was supposed to have seen the light. Soon after, another son was born at the house of saint Danyal and the child was named Danyal after him.

In 1571, Akbar came to Sikri and stayed with Salim Chishti in his humble hamlet. He was so profoundly influenced by saint Salim that he resolved to turn the humble hamlet into a celestial city immediately. Soon the place was examined by Akbar himself and the foundation was laid of Fatehpur—"a city as beautiful as dream and as woeful as its remains." In 1572, he went out

14 Quoted in Islamic Review, 1927 by Menon.

15 Khanqah is a monastery where a Sufi resides.

for the conquest of Guzrat, and while at Cambay, received the Portuguese merchants who came to pay their respects to him. This personal acquaintance with the Portuguese Christians produced immense consequences in future.

But inspite of his innately wonderful mystic nature, inspite of his early liberal Shia influences, inspite of the comprehensiveness of his political attitude and inspite of the broad central Asian traits of his family, Akbar could hardly outgrow the circle of his orthodox Sunni sect that hovered round the royal court. Though Islam knows no state clergy formally, still the powers of the monarch having been confined within the limits of the Shariat,[16] he had to depend on the Ulama [17] for the administration of the state. These men had made almost a monopoly of some of the very big positions of the state, such as the Sadr,[18] Qazi,[19] Mir-adl [20] and Mufti,[21] who, by virtue of the very nature of their work, had to be recruited from the learned class, and learning in India was confined to Sunni theology. Bairam Khan, who was himself a Shia, had, during his regency, appointed

16 Shariat means Islamic Sacred Law.

17 Ulama means learned men.

18 Sadr means the head of the religion in the court, something like the archbishop in Anglicanism

19 Qazi means judge.

20 Mir adl is a subordinate member of the Judiciary.

21 Mufti means a thiological expert who explains Law.

a Shia, Shaikh Gudai,[22] but he had to go along with Bairam Khan. [23] After a short term of office of Khawja Muhammad Qilha, Akbar appointed a new Sadr named Abdu-n Nabi.

In his usual faith and devotedness, Akbar believed in the decisions and interpretations of the Sunni Sadr, Abdu-n Nabi. His reverence for the Sadr was unbounded, specially as Abdu-n Nabi had come from the family of the great lawgiver of Islam, Abu Hanifa, who was universally respected as the greatest of Muslim lawgivers. During the reign of Akbar, the Sadr ranked as the fourth officer [24] of the empire. " He was the highest law officer and had the powers which the administrator general has amongst us ; and was in charge of all lands devoted to ecclesiastical and benevolent purposes and possessed an unlimited power of conferring such lands independently of the King. He was also the highest law officer and might exercise the powers of the highest Inquisitor."[25] The prestige of Abdu-n Nabi was much greater

22 The Shia influence of Shaikh Gudai during the early years of Akbar's reign is an interesting study and may be profitably read in Badauni.

23 Sadrs at the time of Akbar: (*a*) Sheikh Gudai 968 A H , (*b*) Khawja Md. Qilah 971 A.H., (*c*) Shaikh Abdu-n Nabi 986 A H., (*d*) Sultan Khawja 993 A.H., (*e*) Amir Fatchulla Shirāji 997 A.H , (*f*) Sadr Jehan whose name coincides with the title, (*g*) Abdul Baqir, only mentioned by Abul Fazl but with no other details.

24 The four officers are Vakil, Vizir, Bakshi and Sadr.

25 Blochmann, p. 270

than that of the other Sadrs of the Delhi Sultanate. He had been to Mecca several times and learnt the Hadis there. His knowledge of the folklore of Islam was great. He came to the office, after the bribery and corruption of the religious grants ("Aymas") had been discovered, "to set things right." Gradually, Abdu-n Nabi "acquired such absolute powers that he conferred on the deserving people a whole world of subsistence allowances, lands, pensions, so much so that if the bounty of all former kings of Hind were thrown into one scale and the liberality of this age into the other, yet this would preponderate." [26] And Akbar never grudged the gifts of this Sadr.

Akbar's belief in him and reverence for him on grounds of religion gradually put the Sadr above law. From the point of view of Islam, nothing is purely religious and nothing is purely secular, and there is hardly any difference between religion and politics. This explains the absence of any particular treatise on political philosophy, and the conduct of the Prophet and revelations embodied in the Quran are guides for Islamic monarchs generally. Being the guardian of the Shariat, the Sadr practically controlled the religio-political side of Islam. The reverence of Akbar for the Sadr was so great that he would bring him his shoes and place them before his feet. [27]

[26] Badauni, Lowe, Vol. II, p. 70.

[27] Badauni, Lowe, Vol. III, p. 127.

Under the influence of Abdu-n Nabi, Akbar grew to be a very violent and orthodox Sunni. He even grew intolerant, giving orders for the murder of the unbelievers—and the term "believer" was applied to those Muslims only who would follow the interpretations of Abdu-n Nabi and his party. At that time, Shaikh Mubarak of Nagor,[28] a free thinker and theologian, who was much influenced by the idea of the Millennium, excited the jealousy of the Sadr by his learning and prestige. The Sadr Abdu-n Nabi and Mukhdum-ul Mulk Abdulla Sultanpuri represented to Akbar that "Shaikh Mubarak belonged to the class of innovators and was not only himself damned but led others to damnation." At that time, it was customary to get hold of and kill such as tried to introduce innovations in religious matters; witness the case of Mir Habsi and others.[29] "Having obtained a sort of permission to remove him," they sent police officers "to bring him before the Emperor." In their wrath, they polluted Mubarak's prayer room; they pulled down his house and burnt it; not satisfied with this, they furrowed the plot of his homestead land and sowed seeds so that even the last remnant of the house was effaced. Saint Salim Chishti, when approached by Mubarak for shelter, found the Mulla party too strong and advised him to flee to Guzrat. Akbar, the faithful, would

[28] Father of Faizi and Abul Fazl.

[29] Badauni, Lowe, Vol. II, p. 198.

not oppose such ruthless punishment of the faithless. Faith, of course, signified faith in Islam as interpreted by the Sunni Sadr and the Sunni Mufti. In pursuance of this extreme devotion and faith, he ordered many men, who held the Shia doctrine, to be killed; and Badauni tells us that "owing to exertions of Mukhdum-ul Mulk Maulana Abdulla Sultanpuri, many heretics and schismatics went up to the place prepared for them." In 1570, Mir Hakim Moqim of Isphahan and others were killed for being Shias.[30] Maulana Abdulla could not brook anything non-Sunni. His tyranny did not spare even inanimate books. Badauni[31] narrates an occasion when his friends congratulated him on his narrow escape from death because he had expressed an opinion in favour of a book Rawatu-i-Akab, which was looked down upon by Mukhdum-ul Mulk. Abdulla was interdicted as a bigoted Sunni even by an orthodox Mulla like Badauni.

During this period, in some instances, religious considerations weighed with Akbar even in political matters. On one occasion, his faith in and reverence for the Prophet and his family grew so great that he did not kill Muhammad Mirak of Mashad who had rebelled along with Khan Zaman, for Mirak was a Sayid; but Khan Zaman was killed.[32] The faithful now used to

30 *Ibid.*, p. 128.

31 Badauni, original, p. 70.

32 According to Smith the revolt of Khan Zaman was in 1667. Akbar, p. 80.

visit the tomb at Ajmer every year; the new capital grew round the humble hamlet of Salim Chishti; Akbar swept the dust of the mosque of Salim.[88]

By this time, Akbar had successfully checked the insubordinate Afghans, unruly Turki followers and rebellious Mirzas. The Hindus had been humbled, some had been transformed into friends, others matrimonially trapped. Every year, news of success was pouring in from all s ;side the country was relieved of the uncertainty from which she had been suffering since 1526. Now journeys were safe, and commerce was established. Hindustan became a safe home for many who found the sternness of the Ottoman empire, the intolerance of the Persian monarchs or the insecurity of the trans-Hindukush provinces too hot for them. The orthodox sects of Islam found in Akbar a great patron as the government was being run on purely Sunni lines by Abdu-n Nabi and Abdulla Sultanpuri. No doubt the country was conquered by the sword of Akbar and kept by his diplomacy, still the Mullas carried on the government by their interpretation of the laws. As a sincere and devout Muslim, Akbar would not grudge the Mullas their age-long privileges, in the state. Power is a jealous master, it tolerates no rival; specially, power concentrated on the sanction of religion is a dangerous thing, it is more often

[33] Darbar-i-Akbar, p. 36.

abused than not. The Mullas often stepped beyond the limits of their authority and did things which were highly offensive from the state point of view.

Along with the expansion of his dominions Akbar was making a settlement of the lands. In connection with this work, he made enquiries into the Sayurgal lands.[34] He found that all the Sadrs had been guilty of bribery and corruption. It has already been observed that Shaikh Abdu-n Nabi was put in charge of this important office "to set things right." The firman granting land was often ambiguously worded and the firman-holder took as much land as he could and kept it as long as he was able to open his private purse to the Qazis and provincial Sadrs. After repeated enquiries Akbar found that the malpractices were universal. He, therefore, took away the lands from the Afghans and Choudhuris, transformed them into Crown lands and placed the rest at the hands of the Sadr for enquiry and disposal. Every one who held more than 500 Bighas, was asked to prove his title, in default of which he was to lose the lands; a general order was issued that "the excess of all lands above one hundred bighas should be reduced to two-fifth of it; three-fifths of it should be annexed to domain lands." In no time this was to embroil

[34] Sayurghal is a Turki word; it refers to land granted for maintenance. Commonly, it is known as Madad-i-ma'ash. It differs from Jagir, for it is not in lieu of service, as Jagir is.

Akbar in a serious rebellion [35]; the disgruntled Choudhuris now combined with the Mullas; to a war born of politics was added a war born of religion.

As he proceeded with the business of settlements of the newly acquired territories, Akbar discovered that the Qazis used to take bribes from grant-holders, and after examining the whole matter, he dismissed many Qazis. The charge of Badauni that it was out of hatred against the Mullas that Akbar dismissed them, is not borne out by facts; the step was taken from a purely financial point of view. As he made no distinction of religious beliefs in the recruitment of public officials generally, he made no difference in the punishment, if they were found guilty. If the Qazis were found guilty, he would not spare them.

Now Akbar ordered that the Qazis should not let off Aymas unless the firmans were placed before the Sadr for inspection and verification. For this reason, a large number of Aymadars came to the court from all parts of Hindustan, to place their firmans before the Sadr. If one could produce recommendations from any important official or grandee of the court, he was saved; but men without sufficient backing had to bribe Abdu-r Rasul, the personal assistant of the Sadr. There are instances that even the Mehtars (sweep-

[35] Blochmann, p. 269.

ers), Faraschis (steward) and Syces (grooms) had their shares of the bribe. If the bribe fell below expectations, or if there were no recommendations, one had no chance of having one's "Aymas" confirmed. But no one dared complain against the Sadr, for Akbar's faith in him was universally known. "The insolence of the Sadr went so far that, even in the state hall, just before the 'Oju,'[36] he purposely spilt water on the grandees standing near him, only to display the wide and uncontrolled powers he possessed."[37] Even Badauni, a staunch supporter of Mullas, tells us that he was forbidden by his friend Mir Sayid Muhammad Amboa from entering into service under the Sadrs or from accepting any Madad-i-ma'ash. Badauni silently made a reference to his sufferings for not acting up to the advice of Mir Adil Amboa.[38]

After the conquest of the four great fortresses of Mirth, Chittor, Ranthambar and Kalanjar, an invitation from Itmad Khan reached Akbar for putting an end to the prevailing anarchy in Guzrat. Over and above the consideration of the great wealth of Guzrat, and of her commerce, what attracted Akbar was its geographical situation. It was there that the ships for pilgrimage[39] to Mecca and Medina anchored.

[36] Ablution before prayer.

[37] Ain-i-Akbari, Blochmann, p. 269.

[38] Badauni, Lowe, Vol. III, p. 121. Mir Sayid Muhammad said that the Sadrs were tyrannical egotists.

[39] Jahaj-i-Illahi – 100 ships. Sher Shah's pilgrim ships numbered fifty only.

During his Guzrat expedition, Akbar made acquaintance with Portuguese Christians which was afterwards to develop into something very obnoxious to the Mullas. In this war the Hindu Raja Bhagwan Das and his adopted son, Man Singh, distinguished themselves so much that the unprecedented honour of a banner and kettledrums was for the first time conferred on Bhagwan Das—indeed an honour which was never conferred on any but a royal Chogtai of Timur's family and not even on the most honourable families of the Muslim grandees. By now, Surat was conquered by Todar Mal. By the third of June, 1573, the Emperor returned to Fatehpur by way of Ajmer.

Smith has made a very significant suggestion that many notable persons came to offer felicitations to Akbar on his success in Guzrat and one of them was Shaikh Mubarak, who made a significant speech expressing the hope that the Emperor might become a spiritual as well as a temporal leader of the people; the suggestion pleased Akbar who bore it in his mind and acted on it six years later (1579). The entire theory of Smith regarding Akbar's religious views rests on the assumption that from the very beginning Akbar had a mind to combine ' the rôles of the Cæsar and the Pope into one ' and that the speech of the much persecuted Mubarak only put the idea into a definite form. In pursuance of this hint at spiritual dignity, Akbar along with Mubarak worked up silently for six years (1573-79)

with that definite end in view. This ultimately led to the issue of what has been called "the Infallibility Decree" (Mahzar) of 1579, which Smith makes so much of and which, according to him, ended in a "complete renunciation of Islam."[40] But in reality the "Infallibility Decree" was dictated by political reasons more than anything else. Religion had indeed very little to do with its origination.

Akbar never had any intention of giving up his religion or of posing as a prophet. Mubarak's speech was only in the usual language of Persian hyperbole. "Mubarak," says Smith, "came only to offer felicitations"[41] to Akbar on his Guzrat conquest. But Hosain Azad says that Mubarak came 'for some other purpose.'[42]

Akbar was back to the capital, and amongst others Mubarak went to offer greetings to him, for by that time, through the intervention of Mirza Aziz Koka, they had been reconciled. In the mean time, Faizi also had won a place in Akbar's court by his literary attainments. Abul Fazl had been introduced to court in 1572. Akbar was a lover of merit, and he did not fail to mark the literary attainments of the family. Even supposing that the words used by Mubarak were not a part of the customary addresses given by welcome-bidders, if we take the

[40] Smith is very definite that Akbar renounced Islam. But our conclusions are otherwise. The text from which Smith quoted has been misread by him.—E. I. Association Journal, 1915.

[41] Smith, Akbar, p. 76. [42] Darbar-i-Akbar, p. 76.

whole address of Mubarak, we may interpret it otherwise. The word used is "Mujtahid" (مجتہد). Does that mean spiritual headship or was it that the Jam'at before him being ignorant of the Sacred Law, Akbar was asked to give his decision? This speech had absolutely no connection whatsoever with the "Mahzar" of 1579. Smith's translation of the "Mahzar" as the "Infallibility Decree" is wrong.[43] Buckler was right while Smith was wrong; Buckler's conclusion is that the "Mahzar" was a political document.

After the conquest of Guzrat, during the years 1573-74, the system of administration was definitely shaped. A very important part of this system included the branding of horses,[44] opening of registers of royal soldiers under Amirs and Jagirdars, and conversion of confiscated lands into Crown lands.[45]

About this time, Suleiman Kararani of Bengal died and was succeeded by his imperious son, Daud

[43] See Buckler's Leceister University Lecture, 1924 Mahzar means pronouncement, opinion, declaration; secondarily, petition.

[44] Branding of horses is very interesting. Lands were granted to Jagirdars and Amirs for keeping regular horses and soldiers in different parts of the empire. Instead of keeping soldiers and horses, they often produced, when required, untrained and stray horses as royal horses and low class street men as royal soldiers. In order to stop this fraud, regular registers of soldiers, with their fathers' names and addresses, were introduced. Horses were branded with the royal mark on the forehead. This caused a good deal of discontent amongst those whose fraud was thus stopped.

[45] Ain-i-Akbari, Blochmann, p. 269.

Khan Kararani. Daud at once renounced the nominal allegiance to the Imperial Court and assumed royal dignity, had the Khutba read in his name, issued coins and seized the Imperial outpost at Zamani in the Gazipur district. Akbar personally proceeded to meet the enemy. The story of his conquest of Guzrat was repeated. Along with the expansion of Akbar's dominions in the east his vision also expanded. He heard that Suleiman Kararani used to offer prayers every night in company with some 150 persons consisting of the renowned Shaikhs and Ulama, and used to remain in their company till the morning, listening to their commentaries and exhortations. After morning prayers, he would occupy himself in state business and the affairs of the army and of his subjects ; and that ' he had his appointed time for everything and never broke through this good rule.' [46] In his natural spirit of unbounded devotion, Akbar tried to imitate Suleiman in his way of offering prayers. And he ordered that " the cell of Shaikh Abdulla Nyazi Sarhindi be repaired, and (he) built a spacious hall on all four sides of it." He also finished the construction of Anuptalao.[47] He named the hall the Ibadat Khana.[48]

[46] Badauni, Vol. II, p. 203.

[47] The writer went to Fatehpur to have local knowledge of the facts. There are so many stories and gossips current regarding Anuptalao that it is *not* possible to tell which of them represents the real truth.

[48] Ibadat Khana—Worship Hall, *vide* Badauni, Vol. II, p. 204; *not* Iradat Khana (Hall of Desire), as some suggested sarcastically, nor Iyadat Khana (Hall of Sickness and Sympathy).

Just at that time Akbar learnt that his cousin Mirza Suleiman of Badakhshan was arriving in India. He was a great Sufi and was supposed to have reached the stage of Sahib-i-Hal (صاحب حال). It was in this hall of worship that he arranged for the reception of his distinguished cousin. On Friday, he used to go to the new Chapel and hold meetings in the Ibadat Khana. It was a custom in mosques to have a Jam'at on Fridays when, after the prayer had been said, the learned Shaikhs would discuss and give instruction in the words of God and in Tradition. That the motive behind the construction of the Ibadat Khana was purely religious, is proved by the fact that it was open to followers of Islam only, and amongst them admission was restricted to the Shaikhs, Sayids, Ulama and Amirs in the beginning. The example of Suleiman Kararani, the reception of Mirza Suleiman of Badakhshan, the reverence and gratitude for Him that gave him victories, the idea of turning the Khanqah of the Niyazi Sarhindi who had 'joined the circle of Mahadeva,' were the forces behind the construction of the Ibadat Khana. The general notion of unsuspecting readers is that he built a hall for discussion, and that it was in this hall that the two Sufi brothers manufactured the famous Din-i-Ilahi. The condition of the mind of Akbar in this period of his life is excellently painted by Badauni. "For many years previously," says Badauni, "the Emperor gained in succession remarkable and decisive

victories. The Empire grew in extent day by day ; everything turned out well and no opponent was 'left in the world' (kingdom). His majesty had leisure to come into nearer contact with ascetics and [the late] Mu'in and he passed much of his time in discussing the word of God and the word of the Prophet. Questions of Sufism and scientific discussions, enquiries into the Philosophy and Law, were the order of the day. His majesty spent whole nights in praising God ; he continually occupied himself in pronouncing Ya Huwa and Ya Hadi [49] in which he was well versed. His heart was full of reverence for Him Who is the True Giver, from a feeling of thankfulness for his past successes, he would sit many a morning alone in prayer and meditation on a large flat stone of an old building which lay near the palace in a lonely spot, with his head bent on the chest, gathering the bliss of the early hours of dawn." In short, it is true that when he built the Ibadat Khana, he was a deeply devout man but ultimately strayed away from the Path ; and may we ask the reason why ?

[49] 'Ya Hu' and 'Ya Hadi' are the usual forms of Zikr of a Sufi. *Vide ante*, Chapter I, pp. 21-23; Badauni, Vol. II, p. 203.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERIOD OF QUEST

The Ibadat Khana[1] was a building raised on an abandoned and dilapidated cell of Sheikh Abdulla Nyazi of Sarhind. He had been formerly a disciple of Islam Chishti but ultimately he fell back from Islam and became attached to 'the circle of Mahadeva.'[2] A local investigation at Fatehpur Sikri has failed to discover the site of the building and numerous gossips natural in the midst of 'the woeful remains of the city of dreams' have served to hide the real truth in deeper and deeper folds. From the stray references collected from Faizi, Abul Fazl, Abdul Qadir and others, it may be confidently

[1] The historical precedents of the Ibadat Khana:—

(*a*) Indian religious councils of Asok, Kanishka and Harsha.

(*b*) Chinese council of Tai-sing (7th century A.D.) weighed the respective merits of Nestorian Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Laotzeism.

(*c*) Kublai Khan's (13th century A.D.) famous council of Pekin, already referred to (Chapter II, pp. 30-31).

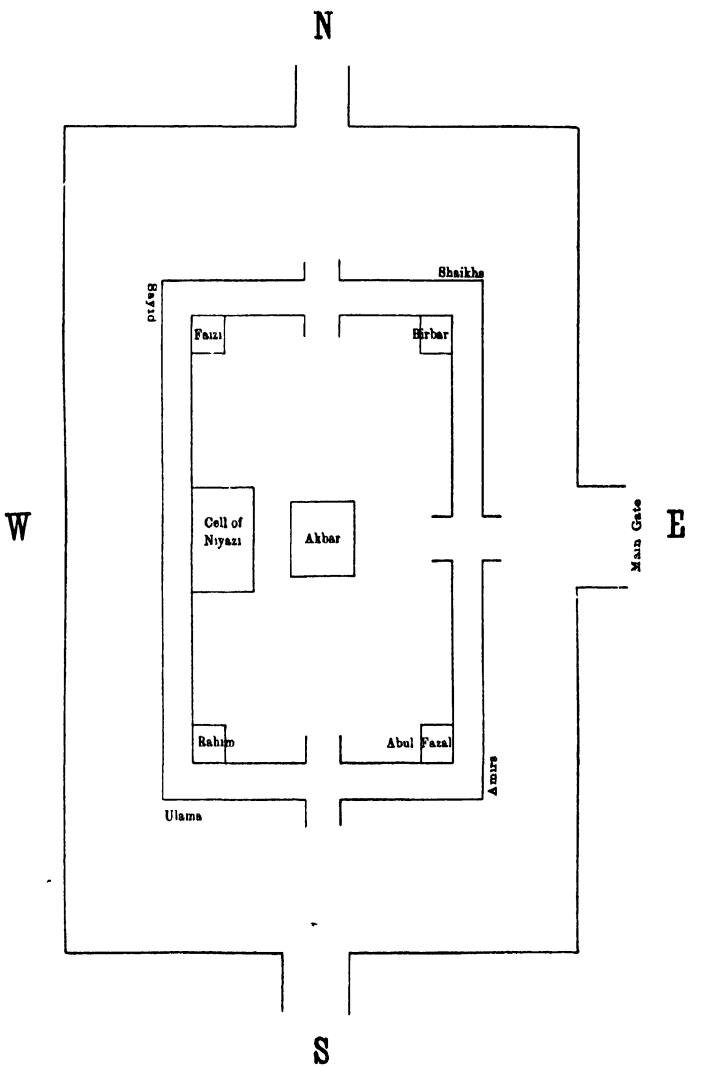
(*d*) Sikandar Lodi's council (Tarikh-i-Daudi, p. 445; E. & D., Vol. IV).

(*e*) Sulaiman Kararani's council of 150 (Bad., II, p. 203)

There is always an idea of Jam'at (assembly) in Islam after every Friday prayer. Debates similar to those held in the Ibadat Khana were also held in the time of Jehangir; the Royal Library of Paris contains the proceedings of these debates amongst the documents presented by Cornel Gentil —Memoires de literature academie royal des inscriptions et Belles Letters, Vol. XLIX, 1808, p. 716, No. 89 and p. 711, No. 18.

[2] Bad., II, p. 204.

The Plan of the Ibadat Khana 1575 A. D.



[*To face p 70.*

asserted that the Ibadat Khana was a sufficiently large building, rectangular in shape, which could accommodate at least 500 men. It had plenty of rooms and balconies. There were halls on all sides and the rooms were separated from one another by means of screens, tapestry and railings. Possibly its situation was near the Royal Palace, if not inside the palace garden. The situation of the Anuptalao, that mysterious pond, which even now exists inside the palace of Sikri and the frequent mention of the Ibadat Khana along with it, point to the fact that the Ibadat Khana was situated not far from it. The idea of the building can be reconstructed with the help of references in the Muntakhabut Tawarikh.[3] In the centre of the Hall was an octagonal platform on which the Emperor had his seat. The four ministers Abdur Rahim, Birbal, Faizi and Abul Fazl each had his station in a different corner. Every Thursday[4] night, the Hall would be open to the Jam'at (assembly) that attended the royal prayer. Extra meetings were held on special occasions. A special meeting was called to offer a reception to Maulana Zia Ulla.[5] During this period, Akbar stood head and shoulders deep

[3] Consult J.R.A.S., 1917, article by Smith. The assignment of places to different classes of people came after the quarrel of the Mullas for position. A few more minor details regarding the Ibadat Khana have been published by Father Heras in the Journal of Indian History, Vol. VI, 1924, p. 5.

[4] Muslims reckon their days according to Lunar calculation. So Friday begins after sunset on Christian Thursday.

[5] Bad., II, p. 204.

in religion, so says Badauni.[6] He was passing through a period of extreme religious susceptibility. Since the birth of Salim, the Khanqah of Salim Chishi had become his favourite haunt. At different hours of the day, he used to spend his time in deep meditation in a small hut close to his place and count beads in the manner of a Sufi. Even in ordinary conversation, he used to talk on God, on Piety, on Law and on Etiquette. Every night he used to converse with the Ulama and Shaikhs on those topics. For some months of the year 1575-76, "Akbar," says Badauni, "observed silence having stopped all egress and ingress in the face of mankind that he might practise the retirement of a monastic solitude in his own garden."[7] After the construction of the Ibadat Khana he became absorbed in the attempt to find a way to God.

Every Thursday night, the Ibadat Khana was decorated with flowers and vases, sweet scents were

[6] Badauni, II, pp. 203-04. There are also instances of these religious discussions outside the Hall of Worship. The Bharat Itihasl. Samshodhak Mandal, Poona, has got three paintings illustrating the religious discussions with the doctors of different faiths These pictures are claimed to be genuine and were taken from Agra by the Marathas Rev. Heras has published a fine though slightly inaccurate account about the personnel of the doctors of faiths present, in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1928. The place of discussion in one of these pictures was a beautiful ridge on the hillock of Fatehpur Sikri—a lovely spot overlooking the vast blue expanse, quite in keeping with the ever-expanding mind of the great convener. See *post*, Appendix B to Chapter IV.

[7] Badauni, II, p. 203.

strewn and incense burnt. Money was distributed to the learned and to the deserving. There was a library inside the Hall and it is known that after the conquest of Guzrat, the library of Itimad Khan had been kept in the Ibadat Khana.

Nizamuddin and Badauni [8] tell us that Shaikhs, Ulama, pious men and a few of Akbar's companions were the only people who were allowed to attend the Ibadat Khana discussions. These were on all kinds of instructive and useful topics. "Assemblies went on well for a time but soon a quarrel arose about the seats and order of precedence."[9] The quarrel for precedence became so vehement that "the Emperor was obliged to assign seats in the Ibadat Khana himself." "His Majesty ordered that the Amirs should sit on the east side, the Sayids on the west, the Ulama on the south and the Shaikhs on the north." This did not put a stop to the quarrels which sometimes ended very disreputably. Badauni relates that on one occasion, owing to the behaviour of the Ulama, such a horrid noise and confusion had arisen that His Majesty got angry and directed Badauni, "in future to report any Ulama who talked nonsense and could not behave themselves properly so that the Emperor might make them leave the hall.' Immediately Badauni whispered to Asaf Khan who was sitting

[8] Badauni, II, p. 204; Darbar-i-Akbar, p 81, gives a fine description of the Ibadat Khana; Akbarnama, III, p. 159; E. & D., Vol. V, p. 309.

[9] Bad., II, p. 205.

by his side, " If I carried out his order, most of the Ulama would have to leave the Hall."[10]

Akbar wanted to have a good commentary on the Quran and an order was given accordingly. A great quarrel arose over interpretations.[11] Each Maulana would claim authenticity for his Dalil (references) which others would not accept; there were hundreds of such Dalils with all their differences in meaning and authenticity. The acceptance or rejection of an authority standing on tradition was more or less a question of belief. Naturally, the scope of differences, resting on beliefs and disbeliefs, was very wide. The training which an Islamic mind gets is a training in imperative commands. Therefore the Mullas were dogmatic and intolerant of other men's opinions. Moreover the Mullas of the court would not generally accept any versions and interpretations but their own, for fear of losing their prestige; they would discuss not in the spirit of a search after truth but in quest of victory. So, more often than not the

[10] Badauni, II, p. 205.

[11] When the revelations were made to the Prophet, they were written down on leaves, leather and stone. Hence was the difficulty of collection; specially many of the reciters were killed at the battle of Badr. Arabic is a difficult language in which dots play a very prominent part. So any change or displacement of a dot, made consciously or unconsciously, makes a world of difference in the interpretations. This accounted for the existence of various interpretations—and consequently of some textual difference—at the outset. By the time of Osman, copies of the Quran in its present form were distributed in public.—Pyam-i-Amin by Abdulla Minhas; Muslim Thought and its Source by S. M. Nadvi, pp. 17-18.

discussions were characterised by bitterness on all sides. The Maulanas went so far as to use their hands when tongue and logic failed to decide the issue. The guardians of the Faith, Mukhdum-ul-Mulk Maulana Abdulla Sultanpuri and Sadr-us-Sudur Abdu-n Nabi, were the leaders in such discussions. And they assumed, by virtue of their position, almost an air of infallibility which was disgusting to many. What Akbar could least tolerate, was pride and conceit, and, most of all, pride of learning. Against the usual and dogmatic assertions of the Sadr and Mukhdum, Akbar used to set up learned scholars ' to break their pride.' Abul Fazl, brother of Faizi and son of Mubarak, had made his way into the court by presenting Ayat-ul-Kursi, a commentary on the Quran.[12] He was chosen to refute the arguments of the Mullas; Haji Ibrahim and Badauni also have been mentioned in the role of disputants against the Mullas on certain occasions.

In course of the debates, personal feeling often ran high; one day Khan Jalan told the assembly that Abdulla Sultanpuri had given a Fatwah[13] against pilgrimage and would not himself go to Mecca on flimsy grounds. A charge brought against the Maulana was that he used to avoid the payment of the legal alms (Zakat) due upon his wealth. Towards the end of each year he

[12] Badauni suggests that Ayat-ul-Kursi was written by Abul Fazl's father Mubarak.—Bad., II, p. 201.

[13] Badauni, II, p. 206.

used to make over all his property to his wife but before the year had run out, he would take it back again.[14]

The Mukhdum-ul-Mulk had been found assailable. "His villainy, sordid disposition, contemptible conduct," as Badauni puts it, "were found out." After the disgrace of Abdulla Sultanpuri, the position of Abdu-n Nabi became unrivalled. Akbar's reverence for the Sadr was almost a proverb. He used to go to the Sadr's house in order to listen to his lectures on Tradition and stood barefooted before him. Even Prince Salim was made to attend his school to learn Forty Ahadis. He was already in charge of the distribution of the "Aymas" and religious grants.

By that time, the Bengal war was over. In 1576-77, Akbar went on pilgrimage to Ajmer; he reached there on the anniversary of the Saint. Akbar performed his usual circuit and visit, recited the Verses, offered prayers and sat in meditation. He paid the entire expenses of the caravan that was to start for the Haj and supplied them with articles for the journey. Further he issued a general order that every pilgrim would get his expenses from the state-treasury. A new department, called the Haj department, was opened

14 "Alms are due on every surplus stock or store which a Sunni possesses at the end of the year, provided that the surplus has been in possession for a whole year If the wife, therefore, had the surplus for a part of the year and the husband afterwards took it back, he escaped the paying of alms."—Blochmann, p. 173, note.

in the year 983 A.H. (1576-77 A.D.), over which he appointed a superintendent called Mir Haji. To this post, he appointed one Khawja of Ajmer family. "Six lacs of rupees in cash and kind, twelve hundred dresses and numerous presents were distributed at Mecca and Medina."[15] He even offered jewelled dresses for the nobe-l men of Mecca, and gave orders for the building of a Khanqah for the use of the pilgrims from Hindustan. His state duties would not permit him to visit Mecca though he had a mind to do so.[16] He followed the caravan bound for Mecca and clothed himself with the dress of a Haji—" half piece worn and half piece turbanned, without shoes," reciting the verses of Quran [17] :—

' I am present, I am present,
There is no God but God.'

He had a fleet prepared called Jahaj-i-Ilahi consisting of one hundred ships.[18] Then he gave

[15] Badauni, II, p. 246; Akbarnama, III, p. 271.

[16] For a king, the pilgrimage is not incumbent—not ' faraz.' It is significant that no Muslim Sultan in India ever went on pilgrimage to Mecca. When the state duties of Akbar would no longer permit him to make these pilgrimages to Ajmer, " he used to entrust this task to one of his sons till the end of his life." *Vide* Agra Gazetteer by Nevill, p. 147. حج بدل (Haj by a substitute) is allowed by the Hadis.

[17] The usual cry of the pilgrim is .. اللهم لبيک. Possibly Lowe makes a mistake in his notes when he says that people did not like Akbar to go to Mecca for fear of losing him; the original Persian text does not bear out this suggestion.

[18] Sher Shah's fleet consisted of 50 ships.

a general order that anybody might go on pilgrimage and that the Government would bear his expenses. This system continued for six years and was stopped only when Akbar found that the money taken from the treasury, on the pretext of the Hajis' expenditure, had been utilised by the Mir-i-Haj (the Superintendent of Pilgrims) for his own purposes.

During this period, the administrative system of the Empire had been remodelled. After the discovery of the corruptions of Qazis in the settlement of lands, the duty was transferred to a new band of officers called Karoris. We have seen in our last chapter how, in course of the distribution of lands, the Sadr-us-Sudur, Abdu-n Nabi, had lost his balance of mind and temper and muddled the whole affair. The discovery of the villainy of the Chief Qazi and the mismanagement of "Sayurghal" lands by the Chief (Sadr) of the state, Abdu-n Nabi, did a great deal to bring discredit on the theocratic side of the state. Still Akbar could not outgrow their influence and issued orders to settle the terms of the Jezia on non-Musalmans as the period of temporary remission had already expired.[19] Jezia had been stopped in 1565, temporarily for ten years, and was now sought to be revived.

During this period, a discussion on the question

[19] Badauni, II, p. 284. Final abolition of Jezia was in 1579-80.—Bad., II, p. 284.

of marriage in Islam cropped up; its nature, extent and validity formed quite a volume in Islamic literature. Akbar was personally interested in the matter, so it received more than the usual attention in the Ibadat Khana. As a strict Muslim, Akbar could not legitimately have more than four wives but actually his harem contained a large number of ladies from all parts of India as well as from outside. According to Imam Malik, the Chief Mulla gave a Fatwah that by Mu'tah (not by Niqah) a man might marry any number of wives he pleased; when the point was thrashed out to a nicety, the position of the Chief Mulla was found to be untenable and he withdrew his previous sanction by camouflage. "This annoyed His Majesty very much," so remarks Badauni. The discussion gradually took a serious turn ; and it was proved that decisions formerly given by the Mukhdum were not from thstandpoint of law but from motives of pleasing the Master. As a result of the dicussion Qazi Yakub was suspended and Qazi Husain Arab Maliki was appointed in his place. This was, it is worth mention, the first direct Shia appointment in the Qazi department. Mukhdum was a great loser by this affair (1576-77); Maulana Jalauddin of Multan, then at Agra, was appointed at Fatehpur Sikri and Yakub was sent to Gaur as a mere district Qazi.[20] Badauni suggests that

[20] Badauni gives a good description of these discussions in his Munta-khabut Tawarikh, Vol. II, pp. 211-15.

" from this forward the road to opposition and difference in opinion lay open, and remained so till Akbar was appointed Mujtahid of the Empire."

During these discussions, Akbar was profoundly upset by the diversity of Traditions and by the decrees of the Sunni lawyers; the very same thing decreed by one is refuted by another, and the refutation is so strong and emphatic that the observance of it amounts almost to non-belief and consequently to eternal damnation, for Islam knows no alternative between belief and non-belief. So, he wanted to know what the other sects of Islam had to say in the matter. He held informal discussions with doctors of other sects and ultimately he laid the Ibadat Khana open to the Shias, Mehdists and other sects. The protagonists of the different schools in Islam began to tear each other with their fine-spun lore of traditions and decisions. The Shias were no less orthodox in their opinion than the Sunnis. The vile reproaches and obnoxious epithets with which the Shias uttered the names of the heroes of the Sunnis were really painful to a believer of the Sunni sect. The Sunnis again answered the charges of the Shias in terms which were no less strong and disreputable.[21] Everybody had his authority and everybody claimed the same authority for himself. Naturally,

[21] Dabistan gives a full description of the Shia-Sunni disputes that took place in the Ibadat Khana. The Tabarra and Modhe-Sahaba controversy may be referred to.

therefore, the different traditions on which the Ulama based their conclusions, were first to be verified, and then authenticated before they could be cited. It was then that the comparative merits of the authors of the traditions were to be judged and could be finally accepted. Thus in finding out the truth, many unpleasant and undignified things were told, to the disgust and annoyance of this or that party. Even the Sahabis and the companions of the Prophet, their actions, the very lives of prophets were subjected to discussion and criticism. Mohsin Fani [22] gives a list of subjects that were discussed in the Ibadat Khana. They were :—

1. Tradition of the camel straying out.[23] 2. Ascent upon the caravan of the Quraish in the beginning of the Hijra era.[24] 3. Demanding nine wives.[25] 4. Separation of women from their husbands.[26] 5. The companions giving up the body.[27] 6. The appointment of the first three Khalifas.[28] 7. The affair of Fadk.[29] 8. War of Siffin.[30]

22 Dabistan, Vol. I, p. 99.
23 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 100, Footnote 1.
24 *Ibid* , Vol. II, p. 100, Footnote 2
25 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 79.
26 *Ibid.*, Vol III, p. 59, Footnote 1.
27 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 99.
28 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 99-100, Footnote 1.
29 *Ibid* , Vol. I, p. 51, Footnote 2.
30 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 59-60, Footnote 2

Now the ever-expanding mind of Akbar was no longer satisfied within the limits of only a sectarian creed. In that age of scholasticism, the scholars raised the sleeping doubts—the why and wherefore of everything—in the minds of that Representative of the age of Renaissance. The veil of belief that had so long enveloped the mind of Akbar was now ruthlessly torn asunder by the lovers of the Faith themselves and the sun of intellect began to radiate his luminous horizon. And the Ibadat Khana was no longer confined within the order of Islam. The Ibadat Khana which began as a Sunni assembly and, which after the discussion of the marriage questions, became a pan-Muslim assembly, now passed on to the third stage, when it was opened to the Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Jews and Christians.[31] In fact, Fatehpur, for about four years, remained, for all practical purposes, the seat of the first great parliament of religions of the world.[32] In this, Akbar only imitated what was done by his great ancestor, Qubli Khan, in China ten three hundred and years before.[33] The difference was only in degree but not in kind.

At about this time, in 1576-77, a very important event occurred outside India which was of considerable importance to the triangular relations of

31 A description of their debates is given in Mohsin Fani.

32 Felix Vayle, Islamic Culture, 1930

33 See *ante*, Chap.. II, pp. 29-30.

the three Muslim Empires of the East—the Timurid Empire of Hindustan, the Shia Empire of Iran and the Khelafat of Rum. The great Shah Tahmasp of Persia was murdered in 1576 and Akbar began to breathe freely. The irksome pretensions of the Shia supremacy over Babar and Humayun were not unknown to Akbar. Even during the time of Akbar, the pretensions continued in some form or other. The Shahs of Persia were never at ease at the growth of so important an empire on the border, specially when the ancestors of the builder of that empire had been their vassals. But Shah Tahmasp knew that Akbar's position was much more secure than that of his grandfather at Samarkand or of his father in Kabul, Qandahar or Hindustan. Both sides waited for an opportunity, and it came to Akbar with the murder of the Shah. But the position was critical from the diplomatic point of view; even if Akbar were to declare himself outside the Shia fold, he would automatically fall into the grasp of the Khalifa of Rum, for it was just as it had been in the 15th-century Europe when all Christian monarchs were automatically under the religious suzerainty of the Pope, all followers of Islam (except the Shias who think that the Khelafat is vacant) in any part of the world are under the Khalifa. Already in 1557, Sultan Suleiman had correspondence with Akbar by which he attempted to establish relations with the Ottoman court through the Turkish admi-

ral Sidi Ali Katibi.[84] Therefore, before Akbar would take the final step of absolving himself from the Shia allegiance, he wanted to fortify his position aginst the Khelafat pretensions; otherwise it might be for him merely a change from the Shia to the Sunni fold, a change not altogether for the better. So, in June, 1579, he had the Khutba read in his own name as was done by his great ancestors, Timur, Mirza Ulag Beg and Babar—by which they put themselves beyond the Sunni Khelafat pretensions. He adopted the title of Khalifa-uz-Zaman and Amir-ul-Muminin and styled his capital as Dar-ul-Khelafat (abode of the Khalifa). His coins bore the inscription "the great Sultan, the exalted Khalifa." Within three months after the Khutba was recited in his name, he indirectly had the Ulama of the state to authorise him to take the final step of declaring himself outside the pretensions of the Shia suzerainty of Persia. Of course, Akbar could have done this without the authority of the Ulama, but he did it only with a view to lessening the opposition, if any, from the Indian Shias, just as the Tudors took the help of the English Parliament, not because they were weak, nor because they feared the Parliament, but because Parliamentary sanction would fortify their position even against the Catholics who owed religious allegiance to the Pope. Akbar's court was at that time full of Shias who

[84] Arnold, The Caliphate, pp. 113-14.

owed primary allegiance to the Shia Shah of Persia. Therefore, the sanction of the Ulama of the court, who were both Shias and Sunnis at that time, minimised the chances of internal opposition. The document by which Akbar gained that diplomatic victory was known as the Mahzar, which Smith erroneously translates as the "Infallibility Decree." But, judged in the light of other authentic facts, the Mahzar was much more political than not and should be treated as such.[35]

When Akbar was making plans to set at naught the pretensions of the Sunni Khalifa and the Shia Shah, his authority in India was being challenged, very slyly and effectively though, by the Sadrus -Sudur, Abdu-n Nabi. About the year 1577-78, the Qazi Abdur Rahman of Mathura[36] complained to the Sadr that a wealthy Brahmin had carried off the materials which the Qazi had collected for a Masjid and built a temple, and that when the Qazi attempted to prevent him, the Brahmin used insulting language about the Prophet. The Brahmin was asked by the Sadr to come and answer the charges but he did not. The matter was reported to Akbar who sent Abul Fazl and Birbal to bring the Brahmin and on enquiry it was found that the Brahmin had actually used insulting language about the Prophet. Now, how should he be punished ?

35 J.R.A.S., 1924, p. 591-608. See *post* Appendix A to this Chapter.

36 Badauni, III, p. 128. We do not understand how Smith could have overlooked such an incident in the development of Akbar's views. Was it done deliberately ?

Some were of opinion that he should be fined and be paraded through the streets on the back of an ass.[37] The Sadr wanted that he should be condemned to death. Whereas no execution could take place without the direct sanction of the Emperor, the Sadr sought the required sanction of Akbar. But the ladies of the harem stood on the way. They wanted the Brahmin to be saved; the sanction of the Emperor was not forthcoming. The Sadr now thought that his position would be much compromised if the Brahmin could not be executed and possibly taking the matter as a personal question involving his prestige, he ordered immediate execution of the Brahmin and the man was executed. Apart from the legality of the execution, the work of the Sadr was highly against the law of the state, as no execution could take place without the sanction of the Emperor, and it involved a great principle whether the Sadr was above the law and his command was above that of the Emperor. Had he been Alauddin or Henry VIII, he would have given immediate orders for the execution of the Sadr. But Akbar was a different man altogether and, instead, he held conversation with Abdul Qadir and other theologians, to know what the law was

37 Actually, according to Hanafi law, the disbelief in Prophets and Saints by non-Muslims and unbelievers who have submitted to the rule of Islam, gives no ground for any breach of agreement between the Zimmis and the Muslims and in no way absolves Muslims from their obligation to safeguard infidel subjects.—Badauni, III, p. 129; Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, note on Zimmis.

on the point.[38] Even the highest knowledge of the Tradition and Law which Abdul Qadir and others brought to bear on the defence of the execution, could not justify the action of the Sadr in this case.

This incident resulted in gradual loss of the position of Abdu-n Nabi whose prestige had already been waning owing to his decisions on the Mu'tah marriage and owing to his mismanagement in the distribution of the Aymas. Badauni informs us that this is the cause of his fall and no longer Abdu-n Nabi and Mukhdum-ul-Mulk "would occupy seats and nobody would salute them."

To summarise what has been said in course of the development of facts relating to the religio-political position of the Emperor, the central events during this period were the building of the Ibadat Khana and the religious discussions, the organisation of the administrative system with its Karoris, and driving out of the Qazis from the positions, branding regulation, conversion of Jagir lands into crown lands, death of Shah Tahmasp and consequent recitation of the Khutba and the decree of 1579 repudiating the Perso-Arabic pretensions on the Timurid House of Hindustan. But all was not as Akbar had expected. He had to encounter opposition from all parties whose interests had been touched by his regulations. The Qazis were angry that

[38] Bad., III, pp. 129-30.

their privileges in the distribution of lands had been taken out of their hands, and that they had been supplanted by the newly appointed Karoris, the monopoly of their judicial authority was broken down by the reservation of the death sentence as a royal prerogative, the principal source of their income, bribery, had been checked and they were ejected from the lands which they had been occupying so long without any authority. This was too much for them. Those Qazis who had been turned out of their offices, and those who had been transferred to distant provinces, began to eke out their living by starting Mosques and Maktabs. Every masjid had a maktab attached to it and the Imam of the mosque, whatever might be the extent of his learning, was a teacher by virtue of his position. These teachers began to spread all sorts of untruths and half-truths in course of their teachings and began to present Akbar in the role of an apostate. After the Jumma prayers, the Moulvis, in course of their instructions to their Jam' at (assembly), excited and incited the ignorant and easily inflammable mass against Akbar, quoting from unauthorised versions of the Quran or interpreting the texts in their own way. The ' Sulh-i-Kul ' (peace with all) policy of Akbar was presented by the orthodox party as a surrender of Islam to the unbelievers and an attack upon Muslim religion. [39]

[39] Smith, Akbar, p. 85.

In that age of belief, the ignorant and unsuspecting mass really believed that Akbar had become an unbeliever and many a gossip found their way before the public about the faith and belief of Akbar. In 987 A.H. (1579-80 A.D.) Mulla Muhammad Yazid Qazi of Jaunpur, who was a bitter Shia and who was intelligent enough to understand the anti-Persian implications of the Mahzar, issued a Fatwah sanctioning Jehad [40] against the monarch "who has encroached upon the grants of lands belonging to us and to God." Further the strict enforcement of the branding regulations, opening up of the register of rolls [41] and the fixing up of the boundaries by cutting down the unauthorised areas of the landholders and the principle of conversion of Jagir lands into Khalsa lands had touched a very influential class of vested interests. They now focussed all their attention to distant and far-off provinces—Bengal and Behar—away from the vigilance of the Imperial eye. The place was geographically favourable as a plague spot [42] and the regulations of Shah Mansur cutting down at his own initiative the allowance of eastern soldiers by

[40] Jehad—a religious war; the root of the word (جہد) means 'to strive in the way of God', *i.e.*, for establishment of faith. The word has undergone many changes in meaning in different ages.

[41] See *ante*, Chapter III, pp. 60-61.

[42] Bengal Afghans had never accepted the conquest of Panipat or Sarhind as the last word in their history of India, and they never hesitated to avail themselves of an opportunity of rising against the Timurids whenever any occurred.

50% in Bengal and 20% in Behar,[43] by demanding the refund of the general cut, had made the soldiers mutinous. The Fatwah of Qazi Yazid of Jaunpur was further strengthened by another Fatwah of the Qazi of Bengal which served only to pour oil on troubled waters. We find the disgruntled Maulanas, the ignorant masses led by them, the refractory Jagirdars, the mutinous soldiers, all joined together and preparations began for the declaration of an open rebellion. Smith suggests that the revolt was primarily a religious revolt but his view is not tenable in the light of facts. It was primarily political and Mullas gave sanction to a war which would have come even if the religious sanction were not behind it, just as was the case on the eve of the French Revolution, when the unwilling and hesitating *Tiers Etat* received the Divine sanction, through the Lower Clergy, to join the war against the Divine Kingship of Louis XVI.

The Orthodox party now began to look upon Akbar's half-brother Mirza Muhammad Hakim as their ruler and started to conspire against Akbar. Masum Khan Kabuli, Jagirdar of Patna, was in communication with Mirza Muhammad Hakim and

[43] Bengal and Behar, for climate and distance, were always looked upon as spots of death. The Mughals considered them like the Andamans of to-day. No soldier would work there without extra pay or allowance. Akbar had to promise an increase of 100% in salary to Bengal and 50% to Behar soldiers when they were asked to fight against Daud Khan. In this war, no less than 14 high officers died at Gaur. See Blochmann, p. 118, footnote.

planned a joint attack from the east and the west simultaneously. The conspirators were much encouraged to find Shah Mansur, the Imperial Finance Minister, joining the conspiracy. The Shah of Persia, inspite of his troubles, sent forces to Mirza Muhammad Hakim, for the implication of the Decree of 1579 were not unknown to him. Moreover the Shah was aware of the fact that ambassadors had already been sent to Akbar's court by the Khalifa and he was afraid of an intervention from the van and rear by the Khalifa and Akbar. [44] As Buckler suggests, the arrival of the Uzbeg embassies during this period was not possibly unconnected with the political events of the period.[45] So the Shah was anxious that the Indian Sultan must be embararssed from all directions possible and he promised help to Mirza Muhammad Hakim in his Indian venture.

By January, 1580, the Afghan Chiefs declared a rebellion. Masum Khan Kabuli was the ringleader. He was joined by Masum Khan Farankhudi, Mirza Ma'in-ul-Mulk, Nyabat Khan, Arab Bahadur, Wazir Jamil, Baba Khan Kakshaal and others. Masum Khan Kabuli defeated Muzaffar Khan at Tanda. Akbar sent Todar Mal to recover Bengal, who cleverly occupied the very

[44] E. & D., Vol. V, Tabqat, p. 407.
[45] J.R.A.S., 1924, p. 603.

strategic Teliagarhi Pass [46] known as the gate of Bengal and checked the rebels from advancing further to combine with the armies of the other leaders. Mirza Aziz Koka was appointed governor of Bengal and Shahbaz Khan was called back from Rajputana. The gravity of the situation may be measured from the fact that, inspite of the supreme efforts of the best generals of the time, it took Akbar four years to pacify Bengal. Farrankhudi even had followers in Oudh where they made an attempt, though short-lived, at a rebellion. In 1580, while the Bengal rebellion was in progress, the officers of Mirza Hakim under Nuruddin raided the Punjab. [47] Within one month Mirza Hakim himself advanced in person and the rebellion now took a serious turn. Akbar thought it necessary to move up personally to the north in February, 1581. The conspirator, Shah Mansur, was found out and executed. Fortunately for Akbar, the Punjab rebellion could not assume a serious turn owing to the imbecility and incapacity of the Mirza, who loved the intoxication of wine and women more than that of war and the throne.

[46] The pass lies between the Sahibganj (E. I. Ry.) hills and the Ganges with an area of six miles It is strategically very important ; the natural barrier of the river Ganges and the mountains would be enough obstacle to any that would attempt to cross over. Buchanan's account of Teliagarhi was published by Beveridge in the National Magazine (Calcutta), January, 1894, p. 21. It says that the Raja was of Tili caste, having his seat at Dharran in Faizullaganj thana in the Bhagalpur District But this is not correct.—Akbarnama, III, p. 151.

[47] Smith, Akbar, p. 119.

Mirza Hakim was practically defeated by himself and Akbar, after pacifying Kabul, restored the kingdom to his half-brother through his sister.[48]

But how should the rebels be punished? In his inimitable way, of course—unlike Balban and Alauddin who punished a whole family for the fault of one, to make an example.[49] Akbar sent for Mulla Qazi of Jaunpur and his accomplice, the Qazi of Bengal and they were thrown into the river.[50] Many other Shias and Maulanas were sent to different places in India and many to Qandahar "where they were exchanged for horses and colts." But Akbar did not punish the rank and file who joined the rebellion, for he knew that the mass, narrow and bigoted in their outlook as they had been, were mere dupes of those still more narrow and more bigoted Mullas. So with a view to reforming and remodelling the Mullas[51] and to bringing about silent and steady reforms at the root, he introduced the following measures

48 This is an instance of Akbar's astute political acumen. He had not only defeated an enemy but turned that enemy into a friend.

49 Lane-Poole, Medieval India, pp. 86, 107.

50 Badauni, and following him Smith, have made capital of the punishment of the Qazis. They interpret this punishment and the deportations as a move against the very Church of Islam. But did they not deserve it from the point of statecraft? Knowing, as Akbar did, their attitude towards him, it would have been a criminal folly on the part of Akbar if the refractory and uncompromising Mullas were left in their positions.

51 Similar attempts were made by Khalifa Mansur in Bagdad and he too was often misrepresented in his days and interdicted as an heretic and apostate.

in the administration of the Muslim Church in Hindustan :—

(*a*) Mosques were not to be started in any and every place according to the sweet will of a Mulla.

(*b*) Madrasas could not be established at any and every place.

(*c*) A Maulana, not duly qualified, would not be allowed to serve as an Imam nor would an unqualified Mulla be permitted to teach in Maktabs and Mosques.

(*d*) Exclusive devotion to theology and Arabic language was discouraged and subjects like Astronomy, Physics, Arithmetic, Poetry, and History (Chronology) were introduced in the curricula.

(*e*) The post of the Sadr-us-Sudur was abolished altogether in November, 1581, for the power of the Sadr was immeasurably great and unrestricted and almost parallel to that of the Emperor as it was based on religious sanction. So he substituted the Imperial Sadr by six Provincial Sadrs in (1) the Punjab, (2) Delhi, Malwa and Guzrat, (3) Agra, Kalpi and Kalanjar, (4) Hajipur near the Sarju river, (5) Behar, and (6) Bengal.[52]

At about this time Akbar was faced with another rebellion known as Ilahi rebellion. There was a sect of Shaikhs who called themselves 'dis-

[52] Smith, Akbar, p. 207. Badauni has discussed these measures from a different angle altogether as measures against Islam. But they were really measures against rebellion.—They were all introduced at the same time after the Bengal rebellion.—The Central Structure of Mughal Empire by Ibn Hasan, p. 269.

ciples' but were generally known as the Ilahis. 'They used to utter all sorts of lies and nonsense.' Akbar had many of them captured and asked them "whether they repented of their vanities"; they replied, "Repentance is our maid-servant." They were sent to Bakkar (Sind) and to Qandahar, and were given to merchants in exchange for Turkish colts. But this did not destroy the rebellion and they continued to trouble for some years more; we find Akbar sending very strong contingents against them even in the year 1585.[53]

Akbar came back to the capital on December 1, 1581, and again resumed the debates of the Ibadat Khana. So long he had searched for the light but had only found it through the eyes of others. He now started an assembly called "the Forty,"[54] whose principle was to "decide by reason." The creeds that were now represented in the Hall of Discussion were—

(1) Sunni.
(2) Shia.
(3) Hindu.
(4) Zoroastrian.
(5) Jain.
(6) Sikh.

53. Badauni, II, p. 308. For details of their doctrines, see Dabistan, Vol I, Chapter III.

54 Bad., II, p. 218.

(7) Buddhist.
(8) Jew.
(9) Christian.

In our next chapter we shall discuss the comparative influences of the different forces that were working in the Ibadat Khana leading to the metamorphosis of 1582.

APPENDIX A

Muslim Rulers of Hindustan, Iran and Rum in the Sixteenth Century

Timurid Sultans of Hindustan.		Shia Shahs of Iran		Sunni Khalifas of Rum.	
Name.	Date.	Name.	Date.	Name.	Date.
Babar ...	1526-30	Shah Ismail	1502-24	Salim the Grim ...	1512-20
Humayun ..	1530-40	Shah Tahmasp	1524-76	Suleiman the Magnificent	1520-66
Sur Dynasty	1540-55	Ismail the Second ..	1576-78	Salim the Drunkard	1566-74
Humayun .	1555-56	Muhammad Khodawanda	1578-87	Murad the Third ..	1574-95
Akbar ...	1556-1603	Shah Abbas	1587-1629	Muhammad the Third	1595-1603

"*Mahzar*"

"Whereas Hindustan is now become the centre of security and peace, and the land of justice and beneficence, a large number of people, especially learned men and lawyers, have immigrated and chosen this country for their home. Now we, the principal Ulama who are well-versed in the several departments of the law and in the principles of jurisprudence, and well acquainted with the edicts

which rest on reason and testimony, but are also known for piety and honest intentions, have duly considered the deep meaning, first, of the verse of Quran, 'Obey God, and obey the Prophet, and those who have authority among you,' and secondly of the genuine Tradition, 'Surely the man who is dearest to God on the day of judgment is the Imam-i-Adil; whosoever obeys the Amir, obeys Thee; and whosoever rebels against him, rebels against Thee,' and thirdly, of several other proofs based on reasoning or testimony; and we have agreed that the rank of Sultan-i-Adil (just ruler) is higher in the rank of a Mujtahid (authority on points of law). Further we declare that the king of Islam, Amir of the Faithful, shadow of God in the world, Abul-Fath Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar Padshah Gazi (whose kingdom God perpetuate) is a most just, a most wise, and a most God-fearing king. Should, therefore, in future a religious question come up, regarding which the opinions of the Mujtahids are at variance, and His Majesty in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom be inclined to adopt, for the benefit of the nation, and as a political expedient, any of the conflicting opinions which exist on that point, and issue a decree to that effect, we do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on us and on the whole nation.

"Further, we declare that, should His Majesty think fit to issue a new order, we and the nation

shall likewise be bound by it, provided always tha such order be not only in accordance with some verses of the Quran, but also of real benefit to the nation; and further that any opposition on the part of his subjects to such an order passed by His Majesty shall involve damnation in the world to come, and loss of property and religious privileges in this.

"This document has been written with honest intentions, for the glory of God, and the propagation of Islam, and is signed by us, the principal Ulama and lawyers, in the month of Rajab of the year nine hundred and eighty-seven (987 A. H.)."

In discussing Akbar's religion, Smith began with some pre-conceived notions. Before he carefully surveyed all the materials in his command, he had formed his own opinions and while going through the work developed his facts very ingeniously and spun them into a logically connected treatise to force the readers into his own conclusions. The *summum* of his findings is that from the very beginning Akbar had an intention to 'make him Pope as well as King' and he only waited for a favourable turn of events which he never failed to screw to his definitely shaped ideas. Smith tells his readers that in this transaction Akbar had the services of Shaikh Mubarak, father of Faizi and Abul Fazl. The persecution, to which Shaikh Mubarak was a victim from the theocratic side of the state, is well known to all

readers of Badauni. Smith brought in Mubarak to support Akbar in his scheme for the eradication of the Mulla influence over the state and of placing himself at the head of the Church and the State. Though each had his different angle of vision—Akbar political and Mubarak personal—the result was the same—namely, the destruction of the Mulla party. So Smith makes Mubarak come to Agra after his successful Guzrat expedition and make a speech expressing the hope that 'the Emperor might become the spiritual as well as the temporal head of his people.'[1] "The suggestion pleased Akbar who bore it in mind and acted on it six years later in 1579."[2] Thus Smith very slyly connects the speech of congratulations of 1572-73 with the Mahzar of 1579. Indeed the document was written by Mubarak; at this time he was the most learned man of the court of Akbar, so the task naturally devolved upon him. The text of the document, as interpreted by Smith, "solemnly recognised Akbar as being superior, in his capacity of Imam-i-Adil, to any other interpreter of Muslim law," and practically invested him with the attribute of infallibility. Here Smith was encouraged to find support in Badauni.

But the view taken by Smith is erroneous in the light of facts during the momentous period

[1] For details consult Durbar-i-Akbar.

[2] Smith, Akbar, p. 116.

of six years 1573-79. The interpretations as advanced by the Badauni group of historians do not fit in with other events of Akbar's life during this period. We have narrated in detail [3] the religious and devout nature of Akbar during this period when we find him untying the lace of the shoes of the Maulana, 'sweeping the dust of the Khanqah of Salim Chishti' and ungrudgingly carrying out the orders of the Sadr as if it was an act of merit to do so. Did not Akbar place at that time the whole of the religious endowments and 'Aymas' in the hands of the Sadr? Even in the year 1575-76, after the so-called hint of Mubarak, did he not make provision for the pilgrims to the holy land of Mecca from the state treasury for all and sundry and continue the practice during the years of so-called Schism (1575-80)? Did he not at the outset confine the Ibadat Khana to the Shaikhs, Ulama and Sayids of the Sunni creed only? Did he not undertake himself very long and strenuous journey to the shrines of saints of Ajmer in the year 1580? Even during the year 1578, the year before the Mahzar, he chanted the Sufi formula of 'Ya hu, Ya Hadi.' [4] Even during the famous year of the Decree, did he not send Rs. 50,000 to the Sharifs of Mecca? Did he not propose to build a Rest House for the Indian pilgrims at Mecca

[3] See *antes* Chap. III, pp. 120-21.

[4] Badauni, Vol. II, p. 203.

during that momentous period ? And such a devout man, in course of a fine morning on the third day of the month of September in 1578, manufactured the famous Decree which placed him above the Ulama or the Shaikhs or even above the Quran, and which pronouncedly extended " the autocracy of Akbar from the temporal to the spiritual side and made him the Pope as well as the King," rendering all opposition impossible ! But no event in the relation between Akbar and the Islamic faith during the period is sufficient to explain the issue of the Mahzar of 1579. The interpretation of the Decree in the light of Badauni is apparently logical in the light of the subsequent events. But it must be remembered that Badauni wrote his Muntakhabut Tawarikh long after the Din-i-Ilahi was shaped and promulgated. When a man finds an effect, it is not very difficult for him to connect the events with a cause. So, Badauni, finding the promulgation of the Din-i-Ilahi, sought a background and found it easily in the declaration of the Mahzar which preceded it. But Badauni—and following him Smith and others—lost sight of the real issue involved in the document. We may admit that the biased and bigoted Mullas could not—or rather did not—like to understand the intricacies of the political situation of the Islamic world, but how could Smith, who had all the materials of history at his command, lose sight of the clear political aspect ? Possibly,

as we have already suggested, he refused to open his eyes to the political side of the question, for that would defeat his pre-conceived conclusions.

Peculiarly enough, the historians of the Muslim Empire have interpreted the Indian monarchs in the light of the Indian events and currents only. That these monarchs had trans-Indian relations, was lost sight of by the Muslim historians. The fault is not exclusively theirs; in the absence of royal archives and news agencies, it was really difficult to have information from far-off countries. Thus the Indian Muslim relations with the Perso-Arabic Muslim Empires have not been properly discussed in the Indian histories written by contemporary Muslims.[5] Had Smith been so inclined, he could easily have explained the Declaration of 1579 by reference to the Timurid relations with the Shia Empire of Persia and the Sunni Khelafat of Rum.

As a Muslim sovereign, Akbar had automatic relations with the Khalifa. The Khalifa of Islam, as the Law demands, always claimed religious obedience from all the followers of the Faith.[6]

[5] There is a fine scope of writing a History of Hindustan from the Muslim standpoint explaining the current of Indian History through trans-Indian Muslim forces.

[6] For the Khelafat pretensions over the Indian Muslims, see Hughes, Dictionary of Islam As far back as 1211 A.D., Sultan Iltutmish even sought recognition from the Khalifa and the half-Muslim Turk became the " light of the religion "—Shamsuddin—after his recognition by the Khalifa. These Khelafat pretensions continued even at the time of the Sepoy Mutiny in the proceedings of the trial of the king of Delhi. The British Government, during the early days of the Great War of 1914,

Hence the dignity of the Khalifa supplied many fruitful causes for war amongst the followers of the faith as was the case with the Pope in Christian Europe before 1648. These pretensions supplied one of the main causes for the war between Timur and the Khelafat, ending in the famous battle of 1402 and the transference of the Islamic capital (Dar-ul Khelafat) to Samarkand and in the assumption of the title of Khalifat-ul-lillah by Timur. These pretensions continued in the family of Timur from 1402 to 1856.[7] To make this claim of Timur to the Khelafat more effective, possibly Abul Fazl has purposely drawn the genealogy of Timur from Adam and the epithet of Khalifa has been associated with all the ancestors of Akbar. After suggesting the natural claim of the Timurid family to the Khelafat, Abul Fazl has drawn a parallel between the horoscopes[8] of Timur and Akbar so that the auspicious birth of both of them equally fitted them to hold the dignity of Khailfa by heavenly ordination. Even an orthodox Mulla like Badauni used the word Khalifa when he mentioned the name of Akbar. Abul Fazl almost always associated the

grew afraid lest the Khelafat pretensions might weigh too much with the Indian Muslims and shake their loyalty to the British Crown. Hence was the declaration of Lloyd-George regarding the integrity of the Khelafat Sultan Mahmud of Gazni, Yusuf bin Tashfin of Spain, Saladin of Egypt and Syria, Nuruddin Omar of Yaman, Iltutmish, Muhammad Tughluq and Firoz Tughluq of Hindustan received investiture from some Khalifa or other.

[7] See Parliamentary Proceedings of the trial of the king of Delhi, 1856-57.

[8] See Ain-i-Akbari, I, pp. 25, 42-43, 80, 128.

title of Khalifa-uz-Zaman to give more stress to the claim and to make it doubly effective, because this assumption of the dignity of the Khelafat was a great achievement which accounts for the prestige of Timur and of his house. But neither the orthodox Ulama of Bagdad and Persia, nor the Khalifas and Shahs, ever accepted these Khelafat pretensions of the Timurid supremacy over Mecca and Bait-ul-Moqaddas and treat this period as one of Schism in the Khelafat. In our opinion, the vindication of the claim of Akbar to this proud position, once held by his great ancestor, supplied one of the foremost considerations for the promulgation of the Mahzar of 1579.

Geographically speaking, the Persian Muslim Empire had very intimate connections with the Timurid kingdoms in Samarkand, at Kabul and in Hindustan. We know the circumstances [9] that led to the struggle between Sultan Bayezid of Turkey and Timur, ending in the great battle of Angora in 1402. After the death of Timur, his immediate descendants were too weak to vindicate their superiority to the Persians or to the Khalifas of Bagdad. When the Timurids were off the field, the struggle continued between the Shia kingdom of Persia and the Sunni kingdom of Arabia. Shah Ismail, the great ruler of Persia (1502-24), restored the former splendour and glory of the ancient

[9] E. G. Brown, History of the Persian Literature under Tartar Dominion, pp. 196, 204. Beveridge contends that Timur was a Shia (J.A.S.B., N.S., XVII, 1921, pp. 201-04); but he is wrong.

kingdom and became a rival to Sultan Salim the Grim (1512-20). Ismail forced many of his vassals to accept the Shia faith, which under him became the national faith of Persia. But those that did not, remained bitterly hostile to the kingship of Shah Ismail and looked upon the Khalifa of Rum as their real ruler, just as the Catholics of England looked upon Mary Queen of Scots and not Elizabeth as their Sovereign. To get back his ancestral kingdom at Samarkand, Babar in 1510 and 1512 accepted the Shia suzerainty of Shah Ismail and agreed to wear the Shia-i-Taj, and to strike coins bearing Shia texts. Babar thus became avowedly a vassal of Shah Ismail, both spiritually and temporally.[10] However, Salim the Grim, as a part of his anti-Persian policy, massacred a large number of Shias, fought the battle of Chaldrain, defeated Shah Ismail and ultimately transferred the Khelafat to the house of Osman by defeating the last of the Abbasids in Egypt in 1517.[11] Thereafter Salim issued a proclamation of hegemony over all Sunni believers all over the world. After the defeat of Shah Ismail at Chaldrain, Babar felt himself strong enough to chalk out his own line of action. In 1526, Babar began to strike coins bearing the texts of the first four Khalifas (Khulafa-e-Rashedun), and had the Khutba read in his name. The removal of Shia texts from the coins[12] proved his

10 Tarikhi Rashidi, pp. 262-66; Memoirs of Babar, pp. 105-09.

11 Hammer-Purgstall, IV, pp. 174, 178, 190-91.

12 C. J. Brown, Coins of India, Pl. X, No. 1.

independence of the Shia Shah of Persia and the reading of the Khutba pointed to the fact that he was beyond the hegemony of the Khalifa of Rum.[13]

When the wheels of fortune turned against Humayun, that unlucky descendant of Timur, he had to accept the Shia-i-Taj of Shah Tahmasp, and undergo the formalities of the Shia court. Practically Humayun had, willingly or unwillingly, to become a vassal of the Shia sovereign of Persia and accepted a commission to lead an expedition to recover the lost provinces of Qandahar and Delhi under the command of Murad, a Persian royal prince aged only six years. It must be noted here that the duty entrusted to Humayun was to reconquer the lost provinces of Qandahar and Delhi; but it was not an independent duty, it was only under a Persian prince. However feeble might have been the voice of the commander of six years, this acceptance of command under a child of six years proved the subordinate position of Humayun. When Humayun failed in his attempt, he had to explain his conduct just as an ordinary officer would be required to do before his master. After the conquest of Qandahar, Bairam Khan, as Shah Tahmasp's direct vassal, was given the principality of Qandahar, which was held by him on the same terms[14] as Humayun held Kabul and Delhi.

[13] Badauni, I, p. 336; Memoirs of Babar, II, p. 190; S. K. Banerji, Religion of Humayun.

[14] Ain-i-Akbari, I, pp. 241, 309; Tabqat-i Akbari (E. & D., Vol V), p. 221.

Thus the relation *de-jure* between the fifth and sixth Timurids and the Persian monarchs was rather feudal. This is further corroborated by the continuance of the Persian orders and decorations and by the association of the title of Masnad-i-Imarat with the throne of Delhi during this period.

When Humayun died, the Shah of Persia did not commit himself to any definite line of action, for he knew that so long as Bairam Khan, his faithful Shia vassal, was there as the guardian of the minor Akbar, the interest of Persia was more or less safe. Bairam's Persian policy could be read in the appointment of a Shia Sadr-us-Sudur, Shaikh Gudai, and in the selection of a Persian scholar, Abul Latif, as the tutor of the young Emperor. Diplomatically speaking, the Persian Shah was right in placing his trust in Bairam, and Bairam was intelligent enough to understand the trend of events. When Bairam's future was in danger, he counted on the help of Persia and would probably have proceeded to Persia where the help of the Shah was a certainty,[15] but that could not be only for his murder in Guzrat. The struggle between the ward and the guardian was probably anticipated by Shah Tahmasp and this explains the belatedness of the letter of condolence

[15] This prospect of Persian assistance is corroborated in the light of events of 1580 when the rebellion of Mirza Hakim was backed by the Persian monarch. See Smith, Akbar, p. 119.

to Akbar on the occasion of Humayun's death.[16] When Shah Tahmasp found that the accession was an accomplished fact, he wanted to make the least use of it, by waiting and watching the trend of events. But the misfortunes of Humayun had finished the cycle of the Timurids for a time and, as days passed, Akbar's stars rose higher and higher. The Shah was always uneasy at the rise of the Timurids in India and would not fail to utilise the Mirzas of the border and so we find the inspiration of Persia behind the Guzrat rebellion in 1573. Naturally the master of Persia did not like to see his vassal in Hindustan grow stronger than himself.

Fortunately for Akbar, by the eighties of the 16th century the Muslim Empires of the Sunni Khalifa and the Shia Shah fell into disorder. Salim the Grim died in 1574 and was succeeded by Murad III; Shah Tahmasp also died two years later in 1576 and there began a period of anarchy and civil war lasting for a period of 11 years with all their concomitant intrigues and plots so common in Persian courts. Murad sent an expedition to Persia through Georgia, which on its way stirred up the Sunni vassals of the Shia Sultan of Persia. Even

[16] Tabqat, E. & D., Vol. V, 276. The letter of condolence came six years after Humayun's death: the long delay in sending this letter of condolence to Akbar may also be explained by the policy of wait and watch adopted by the Persian monarchs towards the affairs of Hindustan.

Akbar was invited " to assist in restoring order." [17] Akbar was very well acquainted with the deplorable state of the Khelafat's internal affairs. Inspite of the outward glamour of the Khelafat, the Grand Vizir Sokoli was murdered in 1578 and the Khelafat forces were defeated in Europe and Georgia.[18] Akbar heard these news possibly from Haji Abdulla and Sultan Khawaja who arrived in Hindustan from Europe at that time. He also received embassies from Nizam Husain of Badakhshan and from Abdulla Khan Uzbeg of Transoxiana and these embassies were not possibly unconnected with the affairs of Persia.[19]

So far as Persia was concerned, the condition was no better. The great Shah Tahmasp was murdered in 1576 and a civil war continued, and it took Persia more than a decade to get to a settled position. The constant rivalry of the Sunni Khalifa and the intrepid raid of the border Uzbegs had placed the Persian Empire in an ugly position. The two monarchs, Ismail II and Muhammad Khodawanda (1574-87), were too weak to retain the proud position of the Safavi dynasty. The weakness of the Safavi Empire in Persia was just in proportion to the strength of the Chogtai Empire in India. Here was the opportunity for Akbar; if

[17] The fact of the Khalifa's invitation to Akbar is mentioned in Ain., III, p. 311; Tabqat, E. & D, Vol. V, p. 407.

[18] Hays, Modern Europe, Vol. I, p. 259,

[19] Badauni, Vol. II, p. 278.

he would not avail himself of the opportunity now, it would never come again, for a powerful monarch like Shah Abbas (1587-1629) would make his best to prevent intrusion into his supremacy, possibly with success.

Conversant with the affairs of the trans-Indian Muslim Empires, Akbar marked out his time for movement. Accordingly, he intended to devise some means of freeing himself from the politico-religious pretensions of Iran and religious hegemony of Rum. But the difficulty lay in the fact that if he would claim himself to be beyond the control of the Shia Sultan of Persia, he would automatically fall under the religious supremacy of the Sunni Khalifa who was the accredited commander of the Faithful (Amir-ul-Muminin). Akbar proceeded very cautiously; he began by having recourse to a very simple and long-trodden path of repudiation of the religious hegemony of the Khalifa by having the Khutba read in his own name as had been done by his great ancestors, Timur, Mirza Ulagh Beg i-Gurgan and Babar. Akbar had been taken to task by the Ulama for this recital and Badauni tried to make a caricature of the Khutba recital by Akbar, whom the chronicler, with his usual venom against all innovations, made to halt in the midst of the recital of the verse composed by Shaikh Faizi, suggesting very cunningly that the failure to finish the verse was due to his heresy or his apostacy. However, we have it from

the versions of Abul Fazl that he finished the Khutba, and historically speaking, this Khutba was only a repetition of what had been done by his great ancestors, and Badauni even admitted that there was much of politics behind the recital.[20] The effect of the recital had indirectly affected the religio-political supremacy of the Khalifa of Rum and the Shah of Iran.[21] But he knew that the Sunni party might be offended at this assumption, so he tried to lessen the opposition by assuming the less offensive title of Khalifa-uz-Zaman as was done by Elizabeth when she changed Henry VIII's title of 'the head of the church' to 'the governor of the church.' But the recital of the Khutba, along with the assumption of the title of 'Khalifa-uz-Zaman,' remained a sufficient challenge to the Khelafat pretensions of Rum. Thus, the difficulty of the repudiation of the Shia hegemony, which meant automatic reversion of the Timurid Empire of Hindustan into the Sunni Khelafat of Rum, was solved by the assumption of the Khelafat title and recital of the Khutba. Now that the purely religious pretensions of the Khelafat were guarded against, Akbar began to attack the politico-religious claim of the Shia Shah of Persia in his peculiar way. At that time Akbar's court could boast of

20 Badauni, II, p. 276.

21 Humayun was made to recite the Khutba in the name of Shah Tahmasp as a mark of acceptance of the Shia creed.

at least 150 poets and 171 generals from Persia. The Persian element in the administration was unusually strong.[22] Instead of an open declaration against the Persian pretensions, Akbar himself had recourse to the Mahzar forwarded to him by the theocratic side of the state and indeed it was devised, as Buckler says, " to fix the position of Akbar in the Muslim world by eliminating him from the religious and political control of Persia." The introduction of the Mahzar would always remain a brilliant testimony to the great political wisdom of the monarch. The Mahzar was addressed to him by the Mullas, guardians of the Faith, who did not like the Shias of Persia, but Akbar was careful enough to see that the susceptibilities of the Shias and the Persians at his court were not wounded. It was couched in beautiful Persian language, the phraseology was also Persian; apparently it contained no single clause which an orthodox Shia might not accept. The Mahzar began by giving the Emperor Akbar the dignity of the Imam-i-Adil or Lord-just, a title which no one, be he a Shia or a Sunni, could object to. Even Badauni, Abdu-n Nabi and Abdulla Sultanpuri signed it.

One Hadis enjoins, " Surely the man dearest to God on the day of judgment is the Imam-i-Adil; whosoever obeys the Amir, obeys Thee and

[22] Badauni, II, p. 327, " His Majesty once ordered that the Sunnis should stand separately from Shias, when the Hindustanis, without exception, went to the Sunni side and the Persians to the Shia side." The list of Shias at Akbar's court given by Blochmann is more or less exhaustive.

whosoever rebels against him, rebels against Thee." Next, the Ulama agreed that "the rank of Sultan-i-Adil is higher in the eyes of God than the rank of Mujtahid." Thus very slyly the Imam-i-Adil of Hindustan, that is, Akbar, was placed above the Mujtahid of Persia. The Ulama were aware of the fact that there may be some differences regarding the interpretations of the religious questions. They wanted that the decisions of the Imam-i-Adil should be 'for the benefit of the nation and as a political expedient' and 'binding on the whole nation.' Thus the opposition on the authority of the decisions of the Shia Mujtahids, which were based on religious pretensions, could be easily shattered. Mark here the use of the words 'for the benefit of the nation' and 'as a political expedient.' The word 'nation' (public) was a new introduction in political terminology, for the Muslim rulers in India, previous to Akbar, had never thought of their rule in Hindustan in terms of the people as a whole except Sher Shah. Further, the decision might have been due to the political necessity which, of course, pointed to the necessity of doing away with the so-called political pretensions of the Shia rulers of Persia.

So far as religion was concerned, there was no freedom given to Akbar. He was bound to limit himself to any one of the conflicting opinions of the Mujtahids in case of variance amongst them; he 'could not give any injunction beyond what has

been given already.' The question of 'infallibility' did not come from Mahzar either directly or by implication. No scope was given to Akbar for the superiority of his intellect to that of the Imam, as Smith would have us believe. Rather the Decree of 1579 circumscribed even the new orders of Akbar by making it distinct that the orders must be in accordance with the verses of the Quran. Now where is the validity of Badauni's suggestion that 'the road of deciding any religious question was open'? As we have pointed out already, Badauni's Muntakhabut Tawarikh, written long after the Mahzar had been promulgated and the innovations introduced by Akbar, has been slyly connected with the event of 1579—for which there is no justification.

Therefore, it may be safely said that the Mahzar of 1579 was a political document, both apparently and by implication, and that it had no connection with the Din-i-Ilahi, they being two different things altogether. And by this Mahzar 'the Mughal pride in Timur's Sunni orthodoxy and in his triumph over Bayezid Yaldirin, was vindicated by the descendants of Akbar.'[23]

[23] Dr. R. P. Tripathi's criticism of Prof. Buckler is not conclusive. *Vide* Some Aspects of Muslim Administration, pp. 156-58. Shah Jahan was given similar powers too. *Vide* A. H Lahori, Padshanama, p. 7.

APPENDIX B

Three Paintings of the Ibadat Khana

The paintings were published in the Bharat Itihash Sanshodhak Mandal of Poona. They were amongst the booties of the Maratha hordes from the Mughal Court of Agra and have been found in the archives of the Peshwas at Poona. The originals are extremely realistic and very faithful in portraiture. They look like real photograph of the personages whom they represent as do the paintings of the Mughal period generally. The colour, touch, lines and scenery breathe an atmosphere of life into the pictures.

They portray the famous debates that influenced so much of Akbar's life and politics, and regarding which there have gathered so many gossips and myths. The pictures are all dated after 1578 A.D. in which the Ibadat Khana assumed its cosmopolitan form.

So far as the place of discussion was concerned, the first two paintings represent the same scenery—a hill in the background from the top of which a waterfall descended into the midst of the debates and the members took their seats away from the fall and there are the paraphernalia of something like worship. The exact venue of these debates, as suggested by Father Heras,

1. Akbar engaged in a religious discussion

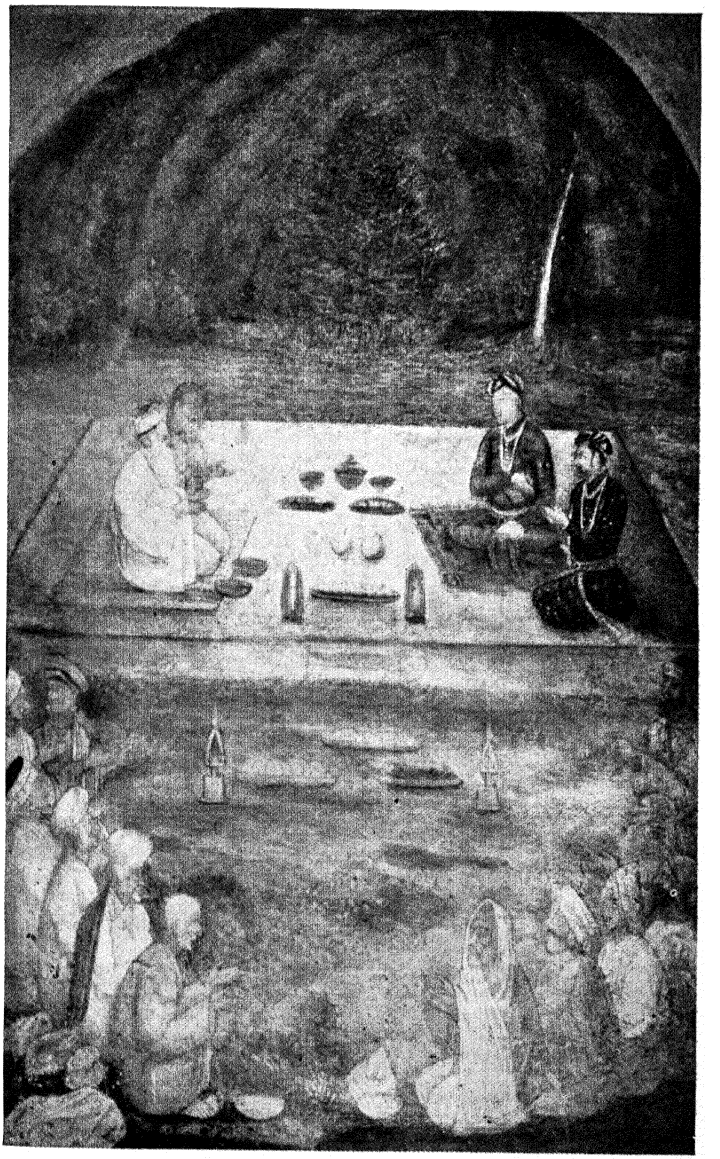
Reprinted from the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, 1928.]

was an old garden at the foot of the hill and rather near to the place where exist the remnants of once famous Hiran Minar or the Tower of Deer. Nothing of the waterfall exists now. The waterfall might have been an artificial one, constructed to cool the atmosphere and water the plants and trees. In the third picture, there was neither the hill nor the waterfall. Instead there was a thatched cottage which might have probably been built for a Hindu Yogi. There in the absence of a cool spring the seekers after truth sought shelter from the scorching rays of the sun inside the cottage. The cottage was surrounded by trees to the left and behind. The lawn in front was overlaid with beautiful plants and creepers and the whole cast of nature in the picture is indicative of a serene atmosphere that characterises those taking part in the debates.

Though the debates in the first two pictures took place at the same place, they were not the same. The first one was at day time and the other at night. In Picture No. 1, the Emperor and the Prince are seated on the ground, in Picture No. 2, they are on a dais. Akbar and Salim have beards in the Hindu fashion. The two bearded gentlemen in front of Akbar and Salim are possibly Faizi and Abul Fazl. There is a marked difference between the crammed and supplicating manner in which the disputants below appeared and the free atmosphere in which the Sufi brothers

expressed themselves. An extreme sense of sincerity may be read in the eyes and expressions of Akbar. Amongst the disputants sitting on the ground, some were Muhammadans and some were Hindus but they cannot be identified exactly. An old man with white flowing beards and a young Brahmin with beard shaved and hair tied in the Southern Indian fashion are rather prominent. In this picture, of the eight disputants no less than five are Muhammadans. This shows that Muhammadans were still the principal partisans in Akbar's search after God. In the extreme right, there is a Hindu who cannot be identified.

In Picture No. 2, those in front of Akbar and Salim are quite different persons. The one with long uncombed hair is certainly a Hindu Sannyasi. The other is very likely a Parsee Dastur. His long flowing white gown, his round cap (Pagdi), his long white beard are characteristic of a Mobed. His aquiline nose also denotes a Parsee origin. He has long round ear-rings This is very likely Dastur Mahyarji Rana who reached Akbar's court in 1582. Akbar was at that time under the influence of the Zoroastrians to a large extent. The portrait also suggests traces of Zoroastrian influence. There are several dishes with bread, fruits and other eatables and four lights. Two of the lights on the Imperial dais are covered with a wirebell or cover. The other pair



2. Akbar in a religious worship

Reprinted from the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, 1928.]

is of a peculiar manufacture resembling crude lanterns generally used on ceremonial occasions amongst the Hindus; the way in which the lights are placed, bespeaks the Zoroastrian influence. The lighted lamps remind us of one of the Happy Sayings of the Emperor, "To light a candle is to commemorate the rising of the Sun. To whomsoever the Sun sets, what other remedy has he but this?"

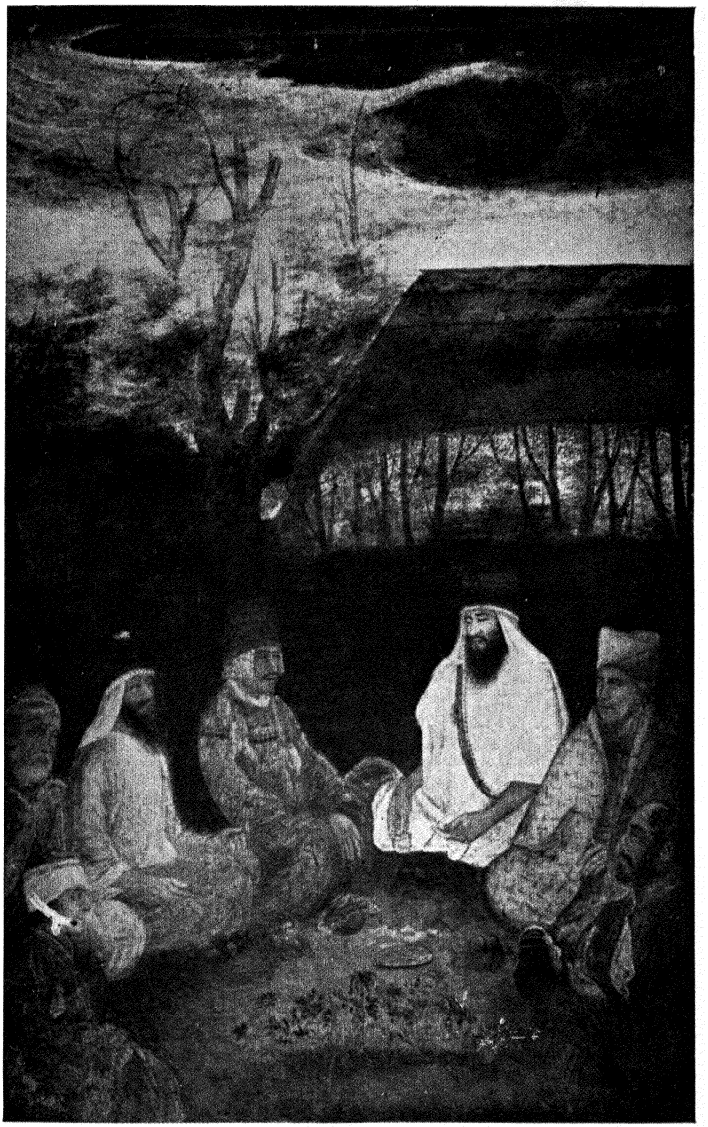
Other personages in the picture cannot be identified. One thing is peculiar, that there is no Muhammadan amongst the fourteen. On the extreme left, from the one with ear-rings and cap to the last one seem to be Rajputs. The last one with a bowl in front is perhaps a recluse. To the right, the extreme one is possibly a Chief and so are the two next to him. The fourth one, clean shaven, with a huge turban on his head and having an intelligent look, is a Hindu Raja. Just below him is also a Rajput. The last one in the picture is wrapped all over the body and has folded hands; he has the look of a great Hindu Yogi, and his bowl testifies to his renunciation of the world. In this picture, the influence of the Muhammadans is the least.

Picture No. 3 is the most beautiful of the three. It is very striking that the Emperor himself is absent. There are seven persons debating, of whom three are Muhammadans ; the one in the centre is an Amir, and on his two sides are two Muhammadan gentlemen, who look like scholars

and their white robes give them a Sufi colour. They may be two brothers from Gilan who arrived on the 20th year of the reign of Akbar—Hakim Abul Fath and Hakim Humam, both in high position at court at that time. The left hand man at the bottom is a Hindu and his looks are exceedingly intelligent. He has a cap on his head and a pyjama on. Just next is a Hindu Raja with his Rajput head dress and a royal robe. On the other side the bottom man is beyond doubt a European as his complexion, training of hair and beard show. The profile of his forehead and the nose are peculiarly Roman. He is very likely Rudolf Aquaviva. He holds a fruit, possibly taken from the assortment on the floor. The serenity of his face and the devout expression of his eyes are characteristic of the man as has been represented in the contemporary accounts.

Next to him is another man who is dressed in a robe which is characteristic of the Buddhist. Smith is of opinion that there was no Buddhist at the court of Akbar. Badauni says in his Mutakhabut Tawarikh that the Samans along with the Brahmins were responsible for an immense change in Akbar's outlook. The Buddhist participation in the Ibadat Khana will be discussed in the next chapter in connection with ' the forces at work.' The cut of the face and the nose reveal a Mongolian type in this participant in the debates. [1]

[1] For details of these pictures, see the Bombay British Royal Asiatic Society Journal, Vol, VIII. 1928.



3. A religious discourse with Rudolf Aquaviva

Reprinted from the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, 1928.]

CHAPTER V

THE FORCES AT WORK

Section I—The Sunnis at the Court of Akbar

By birth, Akbar was a Sunni. The Chogtai Turks had accepted Islam and that automatically put them into the Sunni fold.[1] The quarrel between Timur and Byezid regarding the surrender of Yusuf of Kharput was the occasion for the profession of Sunnism by Timur.[2] Indeed, this profession of Sunnism against the religion of Byezid was by no means actuated by any sense of religious belief. But what was a diplomatic move with Timur became a religious association with his successors. When Babar was placed between the Sunni supremacy of the Khalifa of Rum and the Shia domination of the Shah of Persia, he was forced to accept the latter, but this profession was by no means a matter of faith. As soon as Babar found opportunity, he turned away from Shiaism. Humayun continued his father's faith, and at the time Akbar was born, Humayun was by faith and ritual a Sunni.

But Humayun also had to accept the Shia-i-Taj from Shah Ismail ; it was purely a call of

[1] Titus, Indian Islam, on Khilafat pretensions.

[2] J.R.A.S., 1924, p. 574.

necessity. His family remained strongly attached to the Sunni creed. This anti-Shia feeling in the harem was to a certain extent responsible for the sudden fall of Bairam.[3] After the fall of Bairam, Sunnism was again revived. The Sadrs-us-sudur that were appointed were all Sunnis.[4] The law that was followed in the state was interpreted according to the Sunni doctors like the Sadr-us-sudur Abdu-n Nabi and Mukhdum-ul-Mulk Abdulla Sultanpuri. Both were staunch Sunnis and were highly learned in Islamic law and traditions. Abdu-n Nabi was the son of Shaikh Abdul Quddos of Kango. He had journeyed to Mecca several times. His influence on Akbar was so great that the entire endowments and pensions were left in his charge and he distributed them only to the Sunnis with a lavish hand, to which Akbar did not object. Akbar offered the usual Namaj (prayer), Ramjan (Fast), Zakat (Charity), and pilgrimage to Ajmer. Akbar, in his unbounded devotion to Abdu-n Nabi, used to bring and unlace the shoes and took lessons from him in the Quran and Hadis.[5] Abdulla Sultanpuri of the tribe of Ansur was a great scholar. He received from Humayun the title of Mukhdum-ul-Mulk, 'most respected of the state,' and was in charge of the judicial department of the state.

3 J.R.A.S., 1924, pp. 600-01; Smith, p. 43; Cambridge History of India, II.

4 For a list of Sadrs, see Blochmann, p. 272.

5 Badauni, III, p. 127.

Badauni says, "owing to his exertions many heretics and schismatics went to the place prepared for them." Under the influence of the Sunni Sadr and Sunni Qazi the whole theocratic side of the state ran on purely Sunni basis.

This was the time when in and outside India there were many claimants to the dignity of the Mehdi, whom the Sunnis looked upon as impostors.[6] The Sunnis looked upon these Mehdi claimants as invaders and destroyers of faith and their persecution grew bitter in proportion to the progress the Mehdists made. To defend their century-old traditions and interpretations which they took as the citadel of their faith, the Sunni Ulama opposed all sorts of innovations, actual or imaginary, and religiously guarded against them. Akbar, in his usual impressionableness and faith, became a silent or active party to these persecutions. The peculiar mentality of Akbar during this period of his life has been well illustrated in Akbar's refusal to see the face of Faizi who had been branded an apostate on the eve of his Chitor expedition, though Akbar was extremely delighted to hear of his literary merits. The story of the persecution of the famous Shaikh Mubarak and his sons are well known in history.[7]

Badauni himself admitted that once he escaped

[6] See Darmesteter, for particulars of the Mehdi movement.

[7] Blochmann, p. 190.

death simply because 'he differed from Mukhdum-ul-Mulk in his appreciation of an author.'[8] When the Ibadat Khana was started, it was reserved only for the Sunnis. Indeed, it would be interesting to know the reasons that led to the fall of these two pillars of the state.

We have already narrated in our previous chapters how the Sadr Abdu-n Nabi and Mukhdum-ul-Mulk Abdulla Sultanpuri, in course of their discussions, behaved in a most undignified manner and Akbar had to caution them with a view to mending their conduct.[9] The discovery of the Sadr's real character, in an unguarded moment of their quarrel, caused a good deal of annoyance to Akbar. The pride of the Sunni Mullas had necessitated Akbar's bringing in scholars like Ibrahim Sarhindi and Abul Fazal and Badauni to 'break their pride.'[10] The questions of marriage and pilgrimage proved that decisions were given by the Sunni Ulama not from the religious point but from motives of self-interest. By the murder of the Mathura Brahmin[11] the Sadr had transgressed a very important royal prerogative. The revenue arrangements and survey of lands had proved that the Qazis were guilty of taking bribes at the sacrifice of the governmental interests.[12] The redistribution of the Sayurghal lands had

[8] Bad. III, pp. 114-16.

[9] Bad. II, p. 205.

[10] J.R.A.S., 1862 - Blochmann's article on Badauni.

[11] Bad. III, p. 128.

[12] Blochmann, Ain. 19, pp. 268-70.

exposed the worst side of the character of Abdu-n Nabi. After the discussion of the marriage question, it was decided according to the advice of Badauni that decisions on marriage could be given according to any of the Four Laws. [13] Some Sunni Qazis were transferred from one place to another. Badauni says, 'from this time the seed of discontent was sown.' "The difference amongst Ulama of whom one would pronounce a thing as unlawful and another by some process of argument would pronounce the very same thing lawful, became to His Majesty another cause of unbelief." [14] Badauni had more than once admitted that the Mullas had fallen away from the proud dignity which they held previously, by their nefarious conduct. Mirza Aziz Koka, who was a staunch Sunni and who had refused to appear before Akbar 'with his face shaved,' went to Mecca, only to come back disgusted with the Shaikhs and Ulama for their irreligious conduct. The Mullas were very much upset when Akbar allowed the Shias to attend the Ibadat Khana and their anger was kindled all the more when he threw the gate of Ibadat Khana open to non-Muslims. They could not reconcile themselves to the idea of Akbar's discussing the question of faith and religion with the Kaffirs. They felt themselves humiliated and injured. Further the distribution of lands and

[13] Bad. II, pp. 212-13.

[14] Bad. III, p. 131, footnote 4.

revenue by a Hindu Wazir, Todar Mal, was too much for them. [15] So, out of disgust and from a spirit of vengeance and self-interest, the Ulama joined the rebellion in Bengal. After the discovery of the Bengal rebellion and the Mulla participation in it, attempts were made to eradicate the causes of future rebellions, and naturally the measures adopted turned primarily against the Sunni Mullas who had figured prominently in that conspiracy. Akbar found the existence of so powerful a dignitary like that of the Imperial Sadr, having religious control over the whole of the empire, too dangerous; so he abolished the post of the Sadr and divided the Empire into six provincial Sadrs. [16] Abdu-n Nabi was sent to Mecca with Rs. 70,000 ; on his return, when asked to submit an account, which he could not or did not, he was put into prison. A few days after, he was found strangled by a mob.[17]

These were the Sunni Ulama who were so much against Akbar. The whole of our third and fourth chapters had been devoted to show the religious side of that great Emperor and his gradual turning away from the Sunni Ulama. Of course, the Sunni Ulama would not have been so much against Akbar, but for the fact that their personal interests had been affected, especially by the

15 Bad., Chapter, IV.

16 Smith, Akbar, p. 358. For Sadrs, see Central Structure of the Mughal Empire by Ibn Husan, pp. 265-66.

17 Blochmann, p. 273.

transference of the sentence of death to the Emperor, by cutting down their religious endowments and by the dismissal of many Qazis.

So far as Badauni was concerned, we shall try to discuss in a subsequent chapter of our treatise that the fountain of his venom against Akbar lay in his sense of wrong that his merits had not been sufficiently recognised, while his college fellows like Faizi and Fazl had risen so high. Similarly, personal motives explain much of the vituperations levelled against Akbar by the Sunni Mullas, as would be found in the despatches of the Christian Fathers. If Akbar was driven away from the Sunni fold, it was not Akbar's fault but that of the Sunnis. Akbar began his Ibadat Khana with high hopes and the beginning offered great promise. But their misreading of the liberal tendencies of the great Central Asian, their stubborn opposition to the eclectic tendencies of the age as manifested in Akbar, and their misinterpretations of the innate Sufi tendencies of Akbar's mind came into operation to destroy that great hope, with all its inevitable consequences.

Section II—The Shias at the Court of Akbar

The two main groups into which Islam is divided, are the Sunnis and the Shias.[1] Without

[1] Shias are the followers of Ali, the husband of Fatima, daughter of the Prophet. According to the Shias, Ali was the legitimate Khalifa

entering into the theological differences between the Shia and Sunni creeds, we would only tell our reader that the difference is really very acute. The difference would never be bridged over unless there is some radical change in the conception of the fundamentals of Islam. The Shias never accepted the first three Khalifas (Khulufa-e-Rashe-din), neither the Ommiyads, nor the Abbasids, nor the Osmanalis though they controlled the K'aba and Mecca. The Khalifa, holding the holy places of Islam, was the accredited leader of Sunni Islam. The Shia Sultans of Persia never willingly submitted to religious sovereignty of the Khalifa. In fact, race, culture, geography and tradition separated the Arabs from the Persians so widely that only a bond of religion, without any common head, was not enough to weld them into one nation. Temporary union there had perforce been between Arabia and Persia but that was the unity of the Mongols and the Chinese. During the reign of Safavi dynasty, when a succession of strong rulers occupied the throne of Persia, we find them

but he was superseded by Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman. They hold that the Khelafat should devolve in the family of the Prophet by selection; if by election, it must be confined to the family, for ' in the family of the Prophet no unworthy can be born.' According to them, the real truth is to be found not *in* the lines of the Quran but *between* the lines of the Quran. The secret of Islam was told to Imam Ali. Ali told it to Hasan, Zafar Sadiq, Musa Qasim, Ali Musa Raza, Muhammad Taqi, Hasan, They believe that there will be a resurrection when the true Imam would come out.

extending their religious supremacy even over the Timurid kings of Samarkand and Hindustan. As we have already pointed out, Babar and Humayun [2] had to accept, willingly or unwillingly, the Shia supremacy of the Persian Sultans. This claim of the Persian Sultans continued till a very late period of Indian history.[3] During his stay at the court of Shah Tahmasp in Persia, Humayun's family had to observe the customs of the Shias. His wife Hamida Banu Begum was a Persian lady of Transoxiana, daughter of the Persian Sufi Shaikh, Ali Akbar Jami. His brother-in-law was Bairam Khan,[4] a staunch and orthodox Shia. This contiguity of geography and family association with the Shias had, of course, unconsciously moulded, whatever may be the extent, the thought process of Akbar. Akbar's childhood had passed in the midst of the folklore and traditions of that mystic land; the names of her heroic and legendary kings had cast their magic spell on the young and impressionable mind of that Indian Boy. When he came to Hindustan along with Humayun and Bairam, he continued to be under the Shia suzerainty of the Persian monarch, whose officials or deputies

[2] W. Erskine, Vol. II, p. 275. From Hasan to Zainul Abedin there were twelve such, Muhammad Baqir, Akbari and Abu Qasim. After that there has been no Imam and the Khelafat is now vacant.

[3] Political Theory of the Indian Mutiny by Buckler, p. 83, note 1; Cambridge History of India, Vol. II, pp. 403-04, 411-12, 415-16.

[4] Sultana Salima, the wife of Bairam, was the daughter and Gulrukh Begum, a daughter of Babar.

they were. When Akbar became a Padsha in 1556, he was under the virtual tutelage of Bairam, whose attachment to the Shia Sultan of Persia was very pronounced. During the regency of Bairam, the whole religious administration of Hindustan ran on Shia lines and the Sadr-us-Sudur was a Shia Maulana named Shaikh Gudai.[5] Akbar's religious tendencies were very well marked in that early age and he used to visit the house of Shaikh Gudai and take lessons from him in the Quran and the Hadis. The early Shia influence on him was so pronounced that he named his first two sons Hasan and Husain, the two heroes of the Shias. When the story of the ungrudging patronage of Akbar to poets, painters, musicians, and caligraphists travelled beyond Hindustan, many Persians found their home in Hindustan[6] and Akbar always offered a cordial welcome to the men of intellect, for he believed that intellect has no caste. Maulana Shibli gives a list of 51 poets from Persia, and Badauni mentions no less than 150 and Sprenger makes a still longer list.

The fall of Bairam was the signal for the loss of the Shia supremacy of Persia for all practical purposes though their pretensions about India continued.[7] With the fall of Bairam, his Shia Shaikh, Gudai, also fell from power. His place was

5 For Shaikh Gudai's life, see Badauni, Vol. III, p. 122.

6 See Bad., Vol. II, p. 337.

7 J.R.A.S., 1924, p. 604.

supplanted by a Sunni Sadr and a great change was effected in the theocratic side of the state and a period of intolerance, orthodoxy and persecution followed. Mukhdum-ul-Mulk Abdulla Sultanpuri who was the chief Qazi of the state was responsible for an immense number of deaths of the non-Sunnis and the age-long feud between the Shias and the Sunnis were all the more accentuated by the overwhelming power entrusted into the hands of the Sunni Ulama of the state. Akbar, in his usual faith in the creed of the Sadr and Qazi of the state, completely lost himself and was often a silent party to those persecutions, as we have found in his order for the arrest of Shaikh Mubarak when he was represented to be a Mehdi.[8]

During the supremacy of the Sunni creed (1564-78) in the state, the position of the Shias was anything but satisfactory. They were not allowed to participate in the functions of the state religion, and the Ibadat Khana was not open to them. But it was the problem of marriage in course of the Ibadat Khana discussions that brought the Shias into prominence as their lawyer Imam Malik gave direct sanction to the Mu'tah marriage. When the Sunni Mullas failed to satisfy Akbar, he wanted to know what the other schools had to say in the matter. This accounts for the favourable reception of the three Shia brothers, especially Hakim Abul

[8] Bad., Vol. III, p. 118.

Fath,[9] Hakim Humayun[10] and Hakim Nuruddin[11] who came from Gilan near the Caspian Sea. These three Ulama not only attracted the attention of Akbar by their theological learning but Akbar had high admiration for them as men. The eldest of them, Abul Fath, by means of his winning address, soon obtained great influence with the Emperor though Badauni would like his readers to believe that "Abul Fath flattered him openly and complying with him in all questions of religion and faith and even going in advance of him, so that he was admitted as an intimate companion of His Majesty." Ultimately this Abul Fath got the dignity of a commander of a thousand and had power of a Vakil, an unusual dignity for a commander of a thousand. Badauni says, "he was one of those principal influences that led Akbar away from Islam." Hakim Humayun was so great a friend of Akbar that he often said that he did not relish his meals if Humayun was absent.[12]

A very clever Shia, Sayid Nurulla, is mentioned along with the three Gilani brothers. He was appointed as Qazi-ul-Qazzat of Lahore on, the

9 Abul Fath.—Blochmann, p. 424; Bad., Vol. II, p. 211, Vol. III, p. 233.

10 Hakim Humayun—Blochmann, p. 474.

11 For Nuruddin, see Bad., Vol. II, p. 214, Vol. III, p. 233; Blochmann. Titus mistakes Nuruddin as Hakim Humam; but, in fact, Hakim Humam was the name adopted by Hakim Humayun and he was not a different person.—See Bad., Vol. II, p. 214; Blochmann, p. 474, No. 205.

12 Blochmann, p. 474.

recommendation of Abul Fath.[13] He wrote a very famous book at Lahore in defence of Shia doctrines—Majlis-ul-Muminin. Another important Shia is mentioned in connection with the reign of Akbar both in politics and in religion; it was Mulla Mahammad Yazdi. Badauni tells us, "Yazdi by attaching himself to the Emperor commenced openly to revile the Sahabis (companions of the Prophet) and told queer stories about them and tried hard to make him a Shia." Further Badauni remarked that Yazdi along with Birbar, Abul Fazl and Hakim Abul Fath successfully turned the Emperor away from Islam.[14] The contribution of that Persian scholar in the great metamorphosis was really tremendous; and the wide liberalism which was the greatest legacy of Akbar to Indian Muslim thought was to a large extent due to his contact with the Shias and the Persians. Accepting the three fundamental principles of Islam, these Shias struck at the very root of the Sunni beliefs, in traditions and decisions generally. It was an age of scholasticism, of doubts, of reason; and the Persian schoolmen, in a spirit of enquiry and no less in a spirit of venom, assailed the very citadel of Sunni belief. The attack made by the non-Muslims might be inter-

[13] Nurulla was appointed a Qazi-ul-Qazzat at Lahore on condition that he would be allowed to decide the cases according to any of the four laws sanctioned in Islam—unthinkable at the time of Mukhdum-ul-Mulk Abdulla Sultanpuri or Sadr-us-Sudur Abdu-n Nabi.

[14] Bad., Vol. VI, p. 214.

preted as having been inspired by an ignorance of Islam or by prejudice; but when directed by one within its fold, it is more subtle, more direct and more violent. A careful study of Ibadat Khana in the light of Mohsin Fani proves that inspiration, prophet-ship and miracles of prophets and of saints in general were disbelieved by Akbar as a result of the controversy of Shias and Sunnis.[15] He became convinced that a believer in Islam might remain Muslim even if he would not put implicit faith in the minute details of the Quran as demanded by the Mullas. The infallibility of the Hadis and the Fiqh had already been shaken by the Sunni discussions and disunions in the early part of the Ibadat Khana; now that the Shias joined it, he could see through the ignorance of the Mullas, their bigotry and their unchangeability, and Akbar decided to put a stop to the unquestioned submission to everything past in the name of religion alone. The result was the formation of the famous "Forty,"[16] 'who vowed to decide things according to reason only (Chihil Tanan).' But inspite of this new spirit owing to the influence of the learned Shias, Akbar was by no means a Shia; he liked the Shias because of the freedom of their intellect, because of their polish, and last but not the least, because of their dignified manners amongst all nations that were represented in the

15 See Appendix A to Chapter IV, pp. 97-115

16 Bad., Vol. II, p. 318.

Ibadat Khana. He adopted some of the Persian festivals not because he hated Islam but because it was natural in the days of eclecticism. He adopted them as he had adopted some Central Asian Turki customs and some festivals of the Hindus.[17] The insinuation of Badauni that the non-Sunni festivities were introduced in order to insult Islam, is due to wilful misrepresentation and distortion of facts to represent him in the role of an apostate.

Section III—The Hindus at the Court of Akbar

To start with, Akbar's position was very critical, placed as he had been between the high-handedness of the sturdy Bairam Khan and the intrigues of the wily Maham Anaga and her nefarious son, Adam Khan.[1] To counteract the influence of Bairam, he had to court the good grace of the petticoat, but he could not trust either. So he was in need of an alliance somewhere else and he availed himself of the first opportunity by entering into a matrimonial alliance with Behari Mal of Amber in 1562, while he was hardly a boy of nineteen. Of course, by the time Babar had arrived in

[17] In a subsequent chapter, we propose to discuss the different festivals and customs that Akbar inaugurated and point out their historical background.

[1] Smith's suggestion is that the intrigues of the harem were due to the "pro-Moghul feeling" against Shia Bairam. Buckler also holds a similar view. Behind this pro-Mughal feeling, was the ambition of Adam Khan engineered by Maham Anaga, foster-mother of Akbar.

Hindustan, he found that the officers of the revenue department, the merchants and the artisians were all Hindus. As years rolled by, Akbar came to realise that against the Pathan spirit of stubbornness and the Turki tendency of insubordination, the Hindu alliance had stood him in good stead. Dictated by his foresight and by a spirit of toleration and fair play as taught by his teacher Abdul Latif of Persia (Sulh-i-kul policy),[2] he experimented upon the Muslim system of Jezia in 1564. As a Muslim sovereign with the tradition of Indian Islamic rule, it was of course sacrilegious to remit dues [3] payable by the unbelievers. His courage of conviction stood him in good stead and he attempted that bold experiment.[4]

With Akbar the dicta were, "recognise merit wherever ye find it," "right man in the right place," "intellect is not the monopoly of the believers." He unhesitatingly chose Rajput princes as his generals and raised Tansen (originally a Hindu) to be the first musician of the court. Daswa Nath, son of a Kahar (palanquin bearer), was appointed the first painter of his court; Mahadev became the first physician and Chandrasen the first surgeon. His court was full of the learned Hindus like Madhu

2 Reference may be made to the instruction of Babar to Humayun advising him how to deal with the Hindus.—Dr. Sayyed Muhammad, in the Indian Review, August, 1923.

3 See Shibli's Moqalat-i-Shibli, Vol. 1, and al Jezia by the same author.

4 The suggestion that Jezia was stopped at the instance of his Hindu wife has little truth behind it.

Saraswati and Ram Tirtha.[5] Amongst the famous Nine Jewels of his court no less than four were Hindus.[6] The greatness of the Indian Timurid Empire, in whatever direction we take it—art, literature, music, sculpture, painting, organisation, government and army—was as much due to the Hindu contribution as to the Imperial patronage. But the orthodox section of the state Mullas could not and did not like idea of equal treatment between the believers and the non-believers.[7]

It must be said to the credit of Akbar that, even during the period of Sunni influence under the regime of Sadr and Mukhdum, his orthodoxy and patronage for the Sunni creed did not degenerate into anti-Hindu prejudice in the field of politics. Discrimination was made amongst the believers of the faith and persecution was reserved for the

[5] See Appendix A at the end of this chapter.

[6] Names of Nine Jewels—Abdu-r Rahim, Raja Todar Mal, Man Singh, Birbal, Tansen, Hakim Humam, Mulla Do-Piyaja (fictitious?), Abul Fazl, Faizi. Mulla Do-Piyaja (according to Mr. P. Chowdhury) is not supported by a painting that exists in the library of Lala Sri Ramdas at Delhi where the name of Do-Piyaja is absent and that of one Abul Hasan is mentioned and in the place of Tansen, the name of Miyan Kokultash occurs. Possibly the picture was drawn after Tansen's death and hence his absence. The names of the Jewels are told differently; that is due to the fact that all members might not be present at all times in the court. So the circle of Gems contained different men at different times.

[7] When Todar Mal, a very tried officer of Sher Shah, was appointed Finance Minister, the Muslim grandees petitioned against the appointment and were only silenced by Akbar's snub (Kennedy Vol. I, p. 206.), "Have you not appointed in your estate the Hindus in the department of accounts?"

non-Sunni believers of Islam though Hindus suffered the customary minor disabilities.

During the first period of the Ibadat Khana, the Hall was not open to Hindus and was confined to Sunni Muslims only, who used to say their prayers with the Emperor. In the second period, the other sects of the Faith were invited—to discussions. It was only during the last period—when the ever expanding mind of Akbar, not satisfied with the ever circumscribed limits of the sects of Islam, wanted to quench his thirst for knowledge 'by drinking at the fountain of the savants of all climes,' as dreamt by Abul Fazl—that the Hindus were admitted into the Ibadat Khana along with representatives of other Faiths.

The Books of the Hindus were translated. Faizi translated Yoga-Vashishta, Lilavati, Nala-Damayanti and Batrish Singhasana; Haji Ibrahim Sarhindi translated the Atharva Veda; Mulla Sheri took up Hari-Vansha; the Ramayana and the Mahabharata were jointly translated by a group of eminent scholars including Akbar himself. He called many other Hindu learned men to his court and we find mention of Madhu Saraswati, Madhusudan, Narayan Misra, Narayan Hariji Sur, Damodar Bhatta, Ram Tirtha, Narasingh, Paramindra and Aditya. These pandits were counted amongst "the first class" in Akbar's court "who" as Abul Fazl puts it, "in the light of His Majesty's perfection, perceived the mysteries of the external and internal, and in their understanding

and breadth of their views fully comprehend both realms of thought and acknowledge to have received their spiritual power from the throne of His Majesty.'' Amongst other Hindus who had adorned the court of Akbar, we find Ram Bhadra, Jadrup, Narayan, Madhu Bhatta, Sri Bhatta, Basudev Misra, Bidya Nibas, Gopi Nath and Bhagirath Bhattacharyya.[8]

The stories that are current in Northern India often tell very interesting things about Akbar's connection with Tulsidas, Dadu and Surdas. Tulsidas is said to have been requested by Akbar to show some of his miracles but Tulsidas humbly submitted that he had no miracles to show and he was an ordinary devotee of Ramchandra. Akbar had heard so many things about the miracles of Tulsidas that he became greatly disappointed and ordered that Tulsidas should be put into prison till he showed a miracle. Tulsidas in prison began to repeat the name of Ram and Hanuman. It is said that monkeys, the descendants of Hanuman, the famous devotee of Ramchandra, infested the houses of Agra and Sikri, and the people were so much troubled by the incursions of the monkeys that they believed it to be due to sympathy of the monkeys with Tulsidas, a fellow devotee of their ancestor Hanuman. Everybody interpreted the affair to be a miracle of Tulsidas. Thereupon the Emperor released Tulsidas from the prison and gave a general order that

[8] Ain-i-Akbari, Ain No. 30, Blochmann, pp. 537-47.

monkeys should not be killed in the Empire. And the tradition is still observed in Hindu India.[9]

Akbar is said to have conversed with Dadu for 40 days and was much delighted to see the devotional side of the saint.[10] The details of the conversation are known to historians.

Surdas, that blind saint of India whose mystic songs (dohas) are still a joy to millions of Hindus, had a long interview with Akbar and was much liked by him for his music. Akbar appreciated merit, and he knew how to pick it up and recognise it.[11]

Badauni mentioned that one Purshotham,[12] who had written a commentary on the book 'Khirad afza,' had a long private interview with him and he had asked him to invent particular names for all things in existence. Another Brahmin named Devi, who was one of the interpreters of the Mahabharata, "was pulled up the wall of the castle sitting on a charpai [13] till he arrived near a balcony, which the emperor had made his bed-chamber." While thus suspended he instructed His Majesty in the secrets and legends of Hinduism, in the

9 Grierson, notes on Tulsidas, p. 61.

10 Ramtanu Lahiri Lectures, C. U., 1920. K. M. Sen says that Dadu was a Muslim and his real name was Dayood.

11 Bharatbarsha, 1338 B. S.

12 Badauni wrongly wrote 'Puruko tham,' Vol. II, p 265.

13 Charpai Indian cot. We find in Badauni reference to two other men raised in 'Charpai' and they gave to Akbar the secrets of their tenets.

process of worshipping idol, the fire, the sun and the stars and of revering the chief gods of the unbelivers, such as Brahma, Mahadev, Vishnu, Krishna, Ram and Mahamaya. His Majesty, on hearing further as to how much the people of the country prized their institutions, began to look upon them with affection. In the opinion of Badauni, Devi was responsible for Akbar's belief in the transmigration of the soul.[14] Akbar was very much impressed by his conversation with Devi and " not a day passed but a new fruit of this loathsome tree ripened into existence."

He gave private interviews to many Hindu yogis and enquired of them the following :—

(*a*) The Hindu articles of faith.
(*b*) Their occupation.
(*c*) The influence of pensiveness.
(*d*) Their several practices and usages.
(*e*) The power of being absent from body.
(*f*) Alchemy and physiognomy of the Hindus.
(*g*) The power of the omnipresence of the soul.

Through them, he believed that men might live for over a hundred years and followed some Hindu and Buddhist practices, which might prolong his longevity.

[14] Bad., II, p 265 The idea of the transmigration of the soul was one of the cardinal beliefs of some sects of Indian Sufis though quite against Islamic conception.

Birbar, that 'accursed Birbar' of Badauni,[15] that 'hellish dog' of Badauni, who had come to the court of Akbar in 980 A.H. (1572-73 A.D.), was made Kabi Rai (the treasure of poets) for his talent in composing verses and satires, and he 'tried to persuade the Emperor to worship the Sun and Stars.' He said that "since the Sun gives light to all, ripens all grains, fruits and products of the earth, and supports the life of mankind, therefore, that luminary should be the object of worship and veneration; and that the face should be turned towards the rising and not towards the setting Sun, which is the west [16]; that man should venerate fire, water, stones and trees and all natural objects even down to cows and their dung; that he should adopt the sectarian and Brahmanical thread."

Several wise men at court confirmed what he said, by representing that "Sun was the greater light of the world and the benefactor of its inhabitants, the patron of Kings, and that Kings are his vice-regents. This was the cause of the worship paid to the Sun on the Naw-ruz-i-Jalali,[17] and of his being induced to adopt that festival for the celebration of his accession to throne." Every day he used to put on clothes of that parti-

15 Bad., II, p. 335.

16 This turing away from the west has a sly reference to Akbar's turning away from Islam whose sacred place is at Mecca to the west of Hindustan.

17 Bad., II, pp. 203-5.

cular colour which accords with that of the regnant planet of the day. [18]

The very presence of the Hindu wives in Akbar's harem was responsible for the introduction of many Hindu customs into the Chogtai harem. The Hindu wives of the Muslims were all dead to the family of their fathers for all practical purposes. They could not go back to their fathers, nor were there any social relations between the two families. The Hindu wives were given Muslim names and their children were named after their fathers. They were not burnt but were buried in Muslim fashion and their tombs exist in many places. But inspite of their changed environments, the family customs and the social psychology of the ladies could not be altered so easily. The Hindu princesses in the harem were allowed to follow their own socio-religious customs. Yodha Bai was allowed to have her own Hindu cook. The road connecting the Mahal of Yodha Bai and the appartment of the Emperor was entirely separate and could not be used by others and she had in her Mahal a Tulsi plant, a place for Hom and Yag (sacrifice and rituals). Brahmins

[18] Humayun did the same so far as the audience chamber was concerned. This belief in planets and their movements in shaping the destiny of man, is an old trait of the Turki-Mughal character. There was a belief in the family of Chengiz that, so long as they worshipped the stars and the planets, theirs was the ascendency; they fell away from power and their proud position when they ceased to worship the planets and the stars —Dabistan, Vol. II, p. 121.

could be employed to perform her sacred duties. Generally the Emperor used to respect the Hindu ladies and held them in great esteem for their sweet devoted nature. Jahangir tells us in his Memoirs that Yodhpuri Begam could sacrifice her whole life for one hair of his.[19] Along with these ladies many Hindu customs entered the Muslim harems permanently. As for instance, during the marriage of Salim with the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das, many Hindu customs were observed such as lighting the fire and strewing dried rice [20] on the litter. But it must be remembered that the freedom allowed to the Hindu wives was proportionate to the liberalism of the monarch concerned. In Akbar's time, it was the largest.[21] Akbar had from the beginning a high respect for the Hindus. He was the first of the house of Timur to be born in Hindustan. His birth in a Hindu house while his father was flying away from India as a fugitive—when even his brothers were hostile, not to speak of other Muslims—had a very wholesome influence on his life. If the father could not have any opportunity of showing his gratitude to his benefactor's race, the son had. At

19 Jehangirnama—quoted by Smith p. 225.

20 "Laj"—dried and fried rice. Even at the time of Aurangzeb's marriage paddy, grass, light (Pradip) and husker were used in welcoming the bride.—Bad , III, p. 352. (Anecdotes of Aurangzeb, by Jadunath Sarkar.)

21 For the Hindu wives of Akbar, see. J R.A.S., 1869, and for Hindu customs amongst Muslims, see Qanun-i-Islam by Herklots.

the beginning of his reign while he was placed between the crackers by Bairam and Maham Anaga, it was the help of Behari Mal that carried him through. His long and varied experience had proved to him that Hindu help was essential in the administration of the land of the Hindus. Nearly 50% of Akbar's army were manned by the Hindus and the revenue department was practically a monopoly of the Hindus; so he could not be blind to the sentiments, traditions and psychology of such a major section of the state. He was fortunate enough to have the lesson of Sher Shah before him. Indeed, Sher Shah had only anticipated the advent of Akbar. Like a wise man, Akbar adjusted himself to the change of circumstances and regarded the Hindu princes as partners in the administration and not as mere subordinates. His empire was based on co-operation and mutul adjustment. In their blind fanaticism, the Mullas refused to understand Akbar and interdicted him as an apostate or as irreligious and even branded him as a Hindu. He was not blind to the faults of Hinduism as he was not blind to those of Islam. He did not unhesitatingly believe what the Hindus asked him to believe about their religion. He saw, he examined and he believed or rejected. Akbar's views on the Hindu conception of the doctrine of Incarnation was very excellently put through the mouth of the philosopher in course of the discussion at the Ibadat Khana,

"You first acknowledge one God and then you say that, having descended from his solitude, he assumed a great body; but God is not clothed with a body which belongs to contingency and tangible matter. In like manner, you attribute wives to your Gods. Vishnu, who, according to some, represent the Second person of the Divine Triad and according to others, is ackowledged as the supreme God, is said to have descended from His Station, and become incarnate at different times, in the forms of a fish, a boar, a tortoise and of men. When he was in the state of Rama, his wife was ravished from him. He was ignorant and acquired some knowledge by becoming the disciple of one among the sages of India, until he was freed from body; in the form of Krishna, he was addicted to lust and deceit of which you yourselves tell many stories. You state that in this incarnation, there was little of the wisdom of a supreme God and much of the corporal matter of Krishna; thus you compel mankind, who capable of justice are superior to all sorts of animals, to worship a boar, a tortoise, and you adore the form of a male organ as Mahadev, whom many acknowledge to be God, and the female organ as his wife. You seem not to know that irrational cannot be the creator of the rational; that the one uncompounded is incompatible with division, and that plurality of the self-existent one is absurd. Finally by the worship of a mean object, no per-

fection can accrue to the noble.''[22] His spirit of free thinking, a legacy of his ancestral trait from Central Asia, led people to suspect that ' the Emperor was gentile ' (Hindu), which he was not. The reforms which he introduced amongst the Hindu community sufficently illustrate the breadth of his view and the wisdom of his conception. In his restrictions, which he put on the unrestricted burning of Hindu widows, is reflected the human side of his character, and in him we anticipate a philanthropist like Lord William Bentinck 250 years after. He encouraged the marriage of the Hindu widows, especially of those whose marriage had not been consummated. Many Hindu festivals like ' Rakhi ' (thread) symbolising bond of unity and friendship and ' Dipabali ' (Dewali, the festival of lights) were followed with due *eclat* in the same way that he followed the custom of using horsetails like a Turk and the Quesek like a Zoroastrian, and celebrated Christmas like a Christian. But inspite of all his social eclecticism and Hindu sympathies, he was nothing but a Muslim.

Section IV—The Zoroastrians at the Court of Akbar

During the acrimonious debates of the Ibadat Khana, Akbar was convinced that greatness was not the monopoly of any particular religion and

[22] Dabistan, I, pp. 73-74.

higher truths might be found amongst all religions and peoples. He, therefore, invited reputed saints from all parts of India. As far back as in 1573, during the siege of Surat, when his army was encamped at Kankara Khari, he had made acquaintance with Dastur Mahayarji Rana, the principal teacher of the Zoroastrians at Navasari, which was then the great centre of the Zoroastrian priesthood in India. The great knowledge of the Mobeds and Zoroastrian theologians was almost a proverb in Hindustan. Even Abul Fazl had, before he joined the court of Akbar, thought of sitting at the feet of the learned priests of the Zoroastrians and those learned in the Zend-Avesta. After 1576, when the Ibadat Khana took its cosmopolitan form and, according to Falix Vayle, when it became the first parliament of religions in the world, Akbar invited the great theologians of Navasari, through his governor of Guzrat, Shahabuddin Khan, and Dastur Mahayarji Rana arrived at the court in 1578-79. He had long conversation with Akbar and Abul Fazl.[1]

The Emperor and his chronicler learnt from Dastur " the peculiar terms, ordinances and rites

[1] There is a very popular story in Guzrat regarding a miracle of Mahayarji Rana. By force of magic a Brahmin raised in the sky a metallic tray which resembled a second sun. Mahayarji Rana is said to have brought down the artificial sun by means of his prayers and incantation. Akbar was much surprised at this miracle.

There are innumerable ballads in local dialects of Guzrat concerning this story.

and ceremonies of the Zoroastrian creed—above all the virtues of the worship of the sun and fire." Influence of Dastur Mahayarji Rana was so profound that he is regarded by his fellow Zoroastrians to have converted the Emperor to Zoroastrianism. But Prof. Karkaria, at a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay on the 8th of August, 1896, asserted that it was not Dastur Mahayarji Rana nor the Indian Zoroastrians that changed the mind of Akbar, but it was Ardeshir and the Persian Zoroastrians that were responsible for the leaning of Akbar towards the Zoroastrian

[2] Prof. Karkaria's view was that the Emperor was not satisfied with Dastur Mahayarji Rana and he invited Ardesir of Persia and this Persian Ardesir was responsible for all the changes in Akbar. He even doubts if any Mahayarji Rana ever visited the court of Akbar. But Dr Modi, in his famous article in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXI, p. 69, cleared the doubts raised by Prof Karkaria and profusely quoted from contemporary Muslim authors like Badauni (Vol. II, p. 261) and Abul Fazl (Ain., Vol. I, p 184) and from the writings in the 16th-century Parsee Prayer Books (Tansen's Songs, Marathi Ballads, Hindi Dohas) to show that Mahayarji actually visited the court of 'Akbar in 1578-79 and influenced Akbar's religious practices. Later books like Momalik-i-Hind by Golam Bihist (1782) says," several infidel and impious Parsees who were devoted to the magic" were responsible for leading Akbar away from Islam. The Zoroastrians of Guzrat claimed that Akbar had been converted to their creed and rendered eminent services to their religion, for which his name has been associated in Parsee Prayers along with the names of Ardeshir Bagchan (Artaxerxes of the Greeks) Badauni and Abul Fazl say that Akbar had adopted some Parsee rites in 1580-81 and this was due to the existence of the Parsees at the court of Akbar at that period. On the other hand, Ardeshir of Persia came to the court of Akbar in 1592. It is absurd that Akbar's adoption of Zoroastrian practices in 1581-82 should be due to the influence of one who visited

cult.[2] But the arguments advanced by Prof. Karkaria are too shallow to warrant such a suggestion. Under the influence of the Navasari Mobed, the Emperor was gradually drawn towards the ceremonies of the Zoroastrians.

Another, Azar Kaivan, with his disciples was also mentioned between the years 1681 and 1685. He had long conversation with the Emperor. His headquarters were at Patna.[3] Kaikobad, son of Dastur Mahayarji Rana, visited Akbar and made a favourable impression on the Emperor.[4] Though the people of Persia had accepted the Faith of Arabia, they still clung to their ancient ceremonies and festivities of Iran in whose monarchies they glorified. In the land of Iran, Akbar had, in his early days, developed an unconscious love for the mystics and the mysterious festivities of the country where he had drunk deep in the folklore of the land. Moreover, the Central Asian cult of fire, sun and star worship was in the vein of Akbar and every Turk, whether he is a Musalman, a Christian, a Laotzian or a Buddhist, has a secret love for the

the court ten years after. Moreover this Ardeshir did not come to India to attend any religious discussions which were almost closed by that time; but he was sent by Shah Abbas to assist Mir Jamaluddin in his composition of a work called Ferang-i-Jehangiri. There is no truth in Karkaria's suggestion that Mahayarji Rana did not visit Akbar's court. On the other hand, the Farman granting 200 bighas of land to the family definitely proves the visit of Mahayarji to the Emperor's court.

3 Institute of Cama Magazine, Vols. 20-21.

4 *Ibid.* Vols. 12-14.

manners of the cradle of his race.[5] When the Zoroastrian Mobeds wanted to propound to Akbar the glory of the sun, fire and star worship, they found in Akbar a congenial and willing hearer. Further, there was Birbal, Emperor's friend, with his cult of fire. There were the Hindu ladies in the harem with their 'Hom' and 'sacrifices' to the fire.[6] Gladly Akbar accepted some of the festivals of the Christians in 1580-81, the Persian festivals and Persian holy days entered into the royal list of holidays, and he adopted a calendar according to the manner of the Zoroastrians. In 1589, he introduced the Solar Era, Tarkh-i-Ilahi, as 'he had now been converted to sun and star worship.'[7] But really speaking, there is no causal connection between the

5 Even Kamal Pasha intended the revival of ancient Turki names manners and festivals in the dominions of Ankara.

6 Almost every great man of ancient times worshipped one of the stars. Thus Moses worshipped the Saturn, therefore Saturday is holy day for the Jews. Jesus worshipped the Sun, "on which account Sunday is sanctified by him and finally his soul united with the Sun." So the Christians hold Sunday as holy "Muhammad held Venus in veneration, wherefore he fixed Friday a sacred day." Yudhisthir also worshipped the Sun and all his greatness was due to that Luminary. Sauras (followers of the Sun) are a sect of the Hindu. King Ferosh of Persians was great believer of the Solar cult. Akhetatan of Egypt was a fanatical worshipper of the Sun, the life giving force.' Chengiz Khan and his family felt that their greatness was due to the worship of the Stars and the Luminaries For details, see Dabistan, Vol. II, pp. 105-21.

7 Tarikh-i-Ilahi was introduced at the instance of Mir Jamaluddin. In his recent work on Tarikh-i-Ilahi by Mr. Brendy (Poona, 1933), the political and financial aspects of the Era have been discussed It has hardly any connection with the religion. The Zoroastrian influence was at its highest during the years 1579-85 whereas the Era was introduced in 1589

Sun cult of Akbar and the Tarikhi-Ilahi. He ordered, according to the Parsee custom, "the fire to be lit up and never to be extinguished." He began to wear robes of different colours on different days of the week according to the position of the stars in the sky.[8] He took the girdle and ring of [9] the Parsee Mobeds called 'Quseke' and 'Zunnar.' "Akbar began to prostrate himself in public before the Fire and before the Sun and when the lamps were lighted in the evening the whole court was required to rise up respectfully."[10] The prostration of Akbar before the Sun, the lighting of Fire inside the harem, [11] the acceptance of the girdle and ring, the wearing of coloured dress according to the days of the week, the introduction of Parsee festivals, the adoption of the Solar Era with ancient Parsee names, have all been interpreted as signs of Akbar's conversion to Zoroastrianism.

But inspite of all these, even if they were true, Akbar did not accept Zoroastrianism, nor Christianity, nor Shiaism. His disgust against the conduct of the Mullas and his innate spirit of enquiry had carried him near to every one of these

8 Humayun did the same in his Hall of Audience and belief in Astrology was not an innovation in the house of Timur. See *ante* Chap. III, p. 51.

9 J.R.A.S., Bombay, Vol. XXI. Rehatsek's translation of 'Zunnar' as 'Brahminical thread' is correct. It is also a Parsee custom.

10 Smith, Akbar, p. 164.

11 Akbar's fire Den was in the harem Blochmann, p. 210, footnote.

religions, so much so that the followers of each of these faiths might easily flatter themselves as having converted 'the great Mogol,' who, according to some of them, had ceased to be a Muslim. But it must be said to the credit of the Zoroastrians that, after Islam, theirs was greatest influence on Akbar and it had been through their priests.

Badauni tells us that Akbar now began to "repeat the name of the Sun in the midnight to bring the sun to his wishes." It may be so, for he had learnt by his contact with the Hindu Yogis that supernatural agencies could be brought to help human actions by means of repetition (Zikr).[12] When two years after, in 1582, Bhanu Chandra Upadhyay came to the court, he was asked to compile the "Surya Sahasra Nama" and a disc was prepared containing these 1,001 names of the sun. According to Badauni, Mulla Sheri presented to His Majesty a poem composed by him entitled 'Hazar Shu'a,' which contained one thousand verses in the praise of the Sun.[13] The praise of the Sun may also be found in the Quran.[14]

[12] The Hindu system of Yoga has been adopted by many Americans and Europeans; but they do not cease to be Christians on that score. The idea of 'Jap' was ingrained in Indian Sufism. Akbar, long before he came in contact with the Zoroastrians, used to repeat 'Ya Hu, Ya Hadi,' as the Sufi form of repetition. In 1582, it was an additional form—Bad., II, p. 203.

[13] Mullah Sheri composed a verse in the praise of the sun. –Bad., II, p. 346.

[14] Quran, Chap. XXX, Sura Shams.

Thus the praise of the Sun and the other luminaries did not remove Akbar from the pale of Islam. As regards Fire worship, the liberalism of Akbar had already allowed great scope to the Hindu ladies of the harem to follow their religious rites and they performed ' Hom ' sacrifice inside the harem.

There was also a permanent ' Hom-Kunda' Fire Den) inside the harem. When the fire cult of the Hindus, with which he was long associated, was coroborated by the Parsee Mobeds, and was supported by his friend Birbal, Akbar began to believe in the efficacy of bringing the elements of Nature under his control.

The wearing of the girdle and the ring of the Zoroastrians by no means proved that he had adopted those marks as his acceptance of the creed. This was only to show honour to the Zoroastrians and Mobeds as he had done to honour the Christian Priests, when he appeared in their own costume to receive them. Similar honour was shown to the Hindu Yogis when he used the 'Tilak' mark on his forehead. As has been already pointed out, this was only to create an atmosphere congenial to the understanding of the respective faiths with which he was dealing for the time being.[15]

[15] Payne, Jesuits at the Court of Akbar, Chap. II, *re* costume.

Badauni tells that Akbar used to shave the crown of his head like a Buddhist Lama, in the belief that his soul might pass through it.—Vol. II. p. 305.

The introduction of the Persian festivals came under the circumstances of time. His court was full of the Persian element—he himself had seen those festivals in his early days in Persia; his mother was a Persian lady from Transoxiana. The Parsees in Hindustan and the Persians in Iran in their common cradle had followed the same festivals and the acceptance of the Parsee festivals was, in other words, a partial acceptance of the Persian customs. The great names of the mystic Persia and the still greater fame of her mystic kings had a glamour for him. May we further suggest that the adoption of the Persian festivals was due to a motive of allaying the feeling of discontent created in the minds of the Persian elements in the court after the blow had been aimed at the Persian supremacy by the Mahzar of 1579. The same spirit of toleration and equality of treatment that is responsible for the inclusion of the Hindu, Muslim, Parsee and Christian festivals in the holiday list of the British Government in India, characterised the spirit of the Government of Akbar, when he adopted such festivals as the Persian Naw-ruz and Shariff, the Hindu Rakhi and Dewali, the Christian Mass and Christmas in his official list of holidays.[16]

[16] Festivals that were celebrated under the charge of the Kotwal:—

(*i*) Naw-ruz when 'the great world-illuminating luminary entered the sign of Aries'—at the commencement of the Farwardin (March);

The acceptance of some of the formalities of the Zoroastrians, did not bring him into the fold of their religion.

The very fundamental principle of their religion was questioned by Akbar; he attacked 'the very conception of good and evil emanating from God which was the cardinal basis of their faith.' He said to the Mobed, "You admit the existence of Yezdan and Ahrman, in order that Yezdan may not be said to be the author of evil, but you also assert that Ahrman sprung forth from the evil thought of the all just Lord; therefore, he sprang from good and evil originated from God, the All Just; you are therefore, wrong in the fundamental principle, the very most fundamental principle of your religion, and wrong must be every branch which you derive from it."[17] Was Akbar a Zoroastrian still ?

(*ii*) 19th of the same month—festival of the glorious sun ;

(*iii*) Feasts—

3rd of Ardibishist (April).
6th of Khorbad (May).
10th of Aban (October.)
9th of Azr (November).
2nd of Bahman (January).
15th of Isfandaraad (Feb.)

(*iv*) Illuminations—Naw-ruz, Shariff, Bharat (8th of the Arabian month called Shaban); on morning following illumination was celebrated a festival and kettle-drum was to be beaten on an elephant's back.

[17] Dabistan, I, p.73.

Section V—Jains at the Court of Akbar

During the early Muslim period, Jainism was a creed of the South though it was not unknown to Northern India. In early Muslim histories, we find but scanty references to Jainism, as the Muslims did not come into clash with it.[1] Abul Fazl knew its doctrines as he knew many other things,[2] and it was not unknown to Akbar. When the Ibadat Khana was opened to the non-Muslims, Jains also came in. But from the scanty information on the Jain participation in the debates, even many modern historians completely ignored the sphere of Jain influence in the thought world of Akbar. Elphinstone, Von Noer, Malleson and even Blochmann failed to notice the Jain aspect of the question. In a spirit of forgetfulness, they did not mark the mention of the names of the Jain Gurus in the long list of the learned men ; of course, in his tremendously long list, Abul Fazl did not always classify the learned men according to religion or territory. For the first time, attention was drawn in Jaina Shashana of Benares in 1910[3] to the Jain influence on Akbar. Since then the historians have begun to search for definite information about

[1] Mohsin Fani who attempted a voluminous treatise on the manners and customs and of religions of Asia in the 16th century did not consider Jainism to be of sufficient importance to embody its doctrines in the Dabistan.

[2] Ain , III, pp. 188-210.

[3] Jaina Shashana of Benares, 1910, pp. 113-28.

Akbar's contact with Jains. And a good deal of the humanitarian regulations of Akbar have been ascribed to the Jain influence.[4] Smith attempted to deal with the Jain influence in a chronological manner but his facts are rather scanty and the Jain influence on Akbar's personal life is much more than Smith supposed it to be.

During the last period of the Ibadat Khana, when the institution assumed a cosmopolitan character, invitations were sent to leaders of different creeds. His search for the *Elite* was postponed for a time owing to his preoccupation in the Mirza rebellion in the west and feudo-religious outbreak in the east. After his return from Kabul in 1582, 'having heard of the virtues and learning of Hiravijaya, he ordered Sahib Khan, Viceroy of Guzrat, to send him to court,' as he had done 4 years back when he had invited Dastur Mahayarji Rana of Navasari. There was, at first, much hesitation if he would accept the Imperial invitation, for a Jain recluse has nothing to do with King or Royalty. However, in obedience to the Viceregal farman, Hiravijaya visited the Viceroy at Ahmedabad and was persuaded to accept the Imperial invitation 'in the interest of his religion.' The Viceroy offered him rich presents and cost of the journey but inspite of every pressure the saint, true to his own creed, firmly refused everything.

[4] Smith, Akbar, p. 166-68. K. P. Mitra has done some good work on the subject.

The party included Hiravijaya, Bhanuchandra Upadhyay and Vijaysen Suri. They started on foot with such scanty garments on as their order allowed them and without any guard or guide. They covered up the whole distance on foot from Ahmedabad to Agra and were received with all the pomp of Imperial pegeantry. Hiravijaya became a guest of Abul Fazl till such time as Akbar would find leisure to converse with them.

Akbar had long conversation with them on Jain philosophers specially on the doctrine of non-killing.[5] This brought in Akbar a profound change in the Turki spirit of blood-thirst.[6] Regulations issued by His Majesty regarding the non-killing [7] were so wide and thorough that if anybody did not know the name of the author of these regulations, he would immediately conclude that they were issued by a Jain or Buddhist monarch and not by a descendant of Timur or Chengiz.[8]

" In 1582, the famous tank called Dabul at Fatehpur which abounded in fish was offered to

5 Smith was of opinion that the discussions of the Ibadat Khana were closed after 1582, but the picture as has been described by Father Heras shows Rudolf Aquaviva and Jain Guru taking part in religious discussions. Rudolf left Agra in 1583 and Hiravijaya arrived in 1582. So this picture must be dated between 1582 and 1583 when the discussions must have taken place.

6 ' Happy Sayings,' Ain., III, pp. 380-400.

7 Regulations of non-killing.—Bad., II., p. 331.

8 ' Hiravijaya Kalyan ' mentions that stoppage of animal slaughter was due to the influence of Hira.—Indian Historical Quarterly, 1933, p. 137.

Hira so as to stop fishing at that pond." [9] In the same year, hunting was stopped and royal fishing was much restricted.

In 1582, the Emperor issued orders for 'the release of prisoners and caged-birds' and prohibited 'the killing of animals on certain days.' [10] In 1583, these orders were extended and disobedience to them was made a capital offence.

Hiravijaya was given the title of Jagat-Guru or world-teacher. After this, the saint thought that he had finished his work and wanted that he should retire. The influence of the Jagat-Guru was so profound in the eyes of his followers that he is credited with having converted the Emperor to Jainism. In 1584, the saint repaired to Guzrat; on his way he visited Allahabad.

His colleague, Bhanuchandra Upadhyay, remained at court and Akbar is said to have read 'Surya Shahasra Nama' with him. The colophon that is given below, from the commentary on the Kadambari, testifies to the fact of Akbar's reading the 'Surya Shahasra Nama' [11] :—

9 Rev. Heras, British Royal Asiatic Society, 1928 Bombay

10 Smith, Akbar, p. 167. There are also Sufi sects in Islam who do not kill animals and are strict vegetarians.

11 This colophon is almost the same as in the Lekha-Likhan-paddhati, a manuscript copy of which, dated Bikram Samvat 1711 was seen by Hiranand Sastri with the Jain Muni Sri Vicaksanavijaya at Bangaloie in 1933; the difference is that the latter was written at the time of Jahangir, to whom (and not to Akbar) attributes the conferring of the title 'Khushphaham' on the Jain monk Siddhi and also the conferment of the title Nadir-i-Zaman on the said monk.

'Surya Sahasra Nama' with Bhanuchandra [12]:

इति श्रीपादशाह-श्रीअकब्बर-जलालदीनसूर्यसहस्रनामाध्यापक - श्रीशत्रुंजयतीर्थकरमोचनाद्यनेकसुकृतविधापक - महोपाध्यायश्रीभानुचन्द्रगणितच्छिष्याष्टोत्तरशतावधान साधनप्रमुदितपादशाह - श्रीअकब्बर-प्रदत्तषुरुषहमापराभिधान - महोपाध्यायश्रीसिद्धिचन्द्रगणिविरचितायां कादम्बरीटीकायामुत्तरखण्डटीका समाप्ता।

The point of interest is that Sun worship is rather a cult of the Hindus and Zoroastrians and not of the Jains, but the fact is undeniable that the praises of the Sun were read with the Jain Muni. Possibly the scholarship of Bhanuchandra attracted Akbar and he availed of the services of scholar in the matter.[13]

In 1587, the Emperor issued orders stopping the slaughter of animals for nearly 180 days in a year.

In 1590, one Siddhichandra[14] visited Akbar at Lahore and was honoured with a title. He was

12 इति महाराजाधिराजपादशाह-श्रीअकब्बरजल्लालदीनसूर्यसहस्रनामाध्यापक श्रीशत्रुंजयतीर्थकरविमोचनगोवधनिवर्त्तनाद्यनेक - सुकृतविनिर्मापकमहोपाध्यायश्रीभानुचन्द्रगणिशिष्ययुगपदष्टोत्तरशतावधानसाधनप्रमुदितपादशाहश्रीअकब्बरजल्लालदीन पादशाह श्रीजिहांगीर नूरुद्दीनप्रदत्तपुरुषहमनादिरजमां द्वितीयाभिधानमहोपाध्यायश्रीसिद्धिचन्द्रगणिविरचितालीखलिखनपद्धतिः समाप्ता।

लिखितोयं विद्यापुरे सं० १७११ वर्षे (११)

13 The Surya Sahasra Nama which Akbar used to read has been published by Hiranand Sastri in Indian Historical Quarterly Review, 1933.

14 This Siddhichandra is possibly the Santichandra of Rev Heras.

placed in charge of the holy places of the Jains in the empire. The tax on pilgrims to the Satrunjaya hills was abolished in the same year.[15]

In 1590, the temple of Adiswara on the hills of Satrunjaya in the district of Kathiawar was consecrated to Hiravijaya. The occasion has been memorialised by a long inscription which contains details of the favours shown by Akbar to the Jain Guru.

We do not hear much of the Jains after the death of Hiravijaya in 1592, when he died by starvation as usual with Jain saints. But it is certain that Siddhichandra lived at the court of Jahangir and was honoured with the title of 'Nadir-i-Zaman' and 'Khushphaham.'

Section VI—The Sikhs

The Gurus at the time of Akbar were—
Umar Das—1552-74 A.D.
Ram Das—1574-81 A.D.
Arjun—1581-1606 A.D.

By the time Akbar had come to Hindustan, Sikhism was not a very famous creed; it was only one amongst many. In almost all religions, it is the early saints that keep the torch burning amongst the disciples; so also it was in Sikhism that the brilliance and attainments of the early Gurus attracted

[15] Smith, Akbar, pp. 166-68.

followers into the fold and kept them steady. Of these Gurus, Umar Das had some conversation with Akbar, in whom Umar Das 'found an attentive listener.'[1] This conversation with Umar Das, who died in 1574, throws some light on the spirit of quest in Akbar even before the building of the Ibadat Khana.

Guru Ram Das is said to have been held in great esteem by Akbar. The Emperor gave him a piece of land, within the limits of which he dug a reservoir, since then well known as Amritsar or 'Pool of Immortality.'[2] The Sikh accounts state that possession of Akbar's gift was disputed by a Vairagee (recluse) who claimed the land as the site of an ancient pool dedicated to Ramchandra, the tutelary deity of his order. But the Sikh Guru replied haughtily, 'he was himself the true representative of the hero.' The Vairagee could produce no proof and Ram Das dug deep into the earth and displayed the ancient steps of he Demi-God's reservoir.[3] But Father Heras says that Sikhs were known to Akbar 'only much later' than the discussions of the Ibadat Khana, when he established himself at Lahore.[4] The conclusion of Father Heras is against the existing evidence. If the digging of the Pool at Amritsar was done by Ram

1 Cunningham, History of the Sikhs, p. 52.

2 Dabistan, Vol. II, p. 375.

3 Malcolm, Sketch, p. 29; Cunningham, op. *cit.* p. 50, footnote.

4 Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, 1928, p. 292.

Das on a piece of land granted by Akbar and if Ram Das died in 1581, he must have made Akbar's acquaintance before 1581—while Akbar established himself at Lahore much later than 1581. Therefore, it cannot be true that the acquaintance of the Sikh Gurus with Akbar dates after the establishment of Akbar at Lahore.

Guru Arjun welded the Sikhs into a religious brotherhood with their centre at Amritsar. It was he who, during this period, arranged the Granth Sahib. If the mission of Akbar was to unite all Hindustan by one religious bond, he should not have allowed a new religion to grow and develop in the midst of myriads that were already existing. On the other hand, he allowed every man, every community, nay every religion to develop in its own way and even helped its growth. Tolerance of Akbar was so helpful to the growth of Sikhism that, to use the word of Mohsin Fani, ' in the time of Guru Arjun, Sikhs could be found everywhere throughout the country.' [5] In the Punjab, the saintliness and devotion of Guru Arjun was almost a proverb. During the rebellion of Khusrau he beseeched the help of Guru Arjun ' not by any men and money, but through prayer.' It is said that Arjun had helped him through his prayers and when Khusrau was defeated, Arjun had to pay very dearly in prison. [6]

[3] Dabistan, II, p. 270.

[6] Cunningham, op. cit., pp. 52-60,

In his account, Mohsin Fani placed Sikhism amongst the most well established religions of India and he has devoted a large space to describe it. A position of eminence for Sikhism would have been impossible had not Akbar looked upon it with favour. His conversation with Umar Das and grant of land to Ram Das were eloquent testimony to Akbar's sympathy towards Sikhism.

Section VII—Buddhism

There is yet a good deal of doubt if the Buddhists played any part in the discussions of the Ibadat Khana. The existing evidence does not directly go in favour of Buddhist participation in the Ibadat Khana. Buddhism in India was almost a dead religion by that time. Abul Fazl tells us, 'for a long time past scarcely any trace of the Buddhist monk has existed in Hindustan.' [1] It was living a life of exile in the different corners of India, in Ceylon, in Kashmir, in Tibet and in Nepal. But the philosophy of Buddhism produced a great volume of literature in Hindustan, and was eagerly read by scholars in that age of Renaissance. When Abul Fazl was pining for satiation of his intellectual thirst, he thought of visiting the Lamas in Tibet. [2] In fact Abul Fazl made a detailed

[1] Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch, 1928, New Series, Vol. VIII.

[2] *Ibid.*

study of the Buddhist doctrines in their different forms and he found that Buddhism, though it had fled away from the land of its birth as a creed, was strewn and diffused in the thought-world of India. Modern historians have failed to notice any influence of Buddhism in the thought process of Akbar and, in the absence of any direct testimony corroborating the same, Elphinstone, Von Noer and Smith have not marked any influence of Buddhism on Akbar. Nizamuddin is silent about the Buddhists, nor could we expect him to mention them as he was a mere court chronicler and not a great scholar. The Portuguese writers do not mention anything about the Buddhists as they have not done in case of the Jews, Zoroastrians and Jains. The Christian writers were busy with their own mission of conversion and had no time or inclination to record what others in the Ibadat Khana were doing. Mohsin Fani does not bring in the Samans in the role of disputants in the Ibadat Khana. Abul Fazl has only on one occasion mentioned that the Buddhists had come along with others into the Ibadat Khana [3] and has not given any account of the Samans. Badauni has mentioned the 'Samans' only once along with the Bramhans, as being responsible for the changes in Akbar. But Macdonald is of opinion that the 'Samans' referred to, are a Central Asian people and not Buddhists; whereas Lowe

[3] Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 252-53.

in his notes says that the 'Saman' of Badauni is a Buddhist 'Saman' and the word is a loose form of the Sanskrit '*Shraman*.'[4] We believe that Macdonald is not correct. The discussions were held in India and naturally the representatives of religious currents in India or originating in India, should be invited. If he could invite a religion like Sikhism or a minor sect like the *Charbaks*,[5] there should be no reason why such an important religion of Indian origin should be omitted. If the 'Samans' referred to by Badauni were a Central Asian people, as Macdonald would have us believe, why should they be invited to the exclusion of so important a religion of Indian origin. Moreover the Central Asian 'Samanism' had no followers in India, nor was it mentioned in any of the religious books with which Akbar was conversant. Further the mention of the words 'Saman' and 'Brahman' together by Badauni, is significant. Badauni referred to contributions of both in the transformation of thought of Akbar jointly. To quote Badauni, "And Samans and Brahmans brought forward proofs based on reason and traditional testimony, for the truth of their own, and the fallacy of our own religion and inculcated their doctrine with such firmness and assurance."[6] This joint contribution may be due to the joint participation of savants having

4 Badauni, II, p. 264, footnote No. 1.
5 Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 252-53.
6 Badauni, II, p. 264.

much in common as was actually the case of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. Otherwise Badauni would have discussed the ' Samans ' and ' Brahmans ' separately. Further Badauni says that Akbar used to shave the crown of his head in Buddhist manner.

May be that Buddhists were not to be found in the mainland of Hindustan but it was possible to get some from Tibet, Ceylon or Kashmir as he did actually invite Christians from Goa, Jains from Ahmmadabad, or Mobeds from Navasarai or Iran.[7] Abul Fazl, who was in charge of the affairs at the time, was deeply versed in Buddhist philosophy and it was in the fitness of things that Abul Fazl should invite the Buddhist savants. Abul Fazl promised, in his Ain No. 77,[8] to write a detailed treatise on His Majesty ' as a religious guide to the people' but he could not unfortunately fulfil his promise and thus we lost the opportunity of knowing ' first hand.'

There is yet another direct proof of the Buddhist participation in the discussions of the Ibadat Khana. In picture No. 3, described Appendix C to Chapter IV, we meet with a picture of a Buddhist Shraman. Father Heras[9] identifies the disputant to the right side just above the Christian gentlemen as a Buddhist Shraman. But no details about the Buddhist

[7] J.R.A.S., XXI, J. J. Modi, p. 69.

[8] Blochmann, p. 162.

[9] Royal Asiatic Society Journal, 1928. Bombay Branch.

contribution to the Ibadat Khana are available. It may, however, be confidently surmised that the Buddhists are not less responsible than the Jains for the promulgation of the regulations regarding the non-killing and similar humanitarian works in connection with administration. Beyond that we have no definite information about the Buddhists at the court of Akbar.[10]

Section VIII—The Jews

The Dabistan-i-Mazahib informed us that the Jews were present in the hall of worship and took the role of disputants in the course of debates. Mohsin Fani records the part played by a Jew in the midst of the debate between a Shia and a Sunni. But the way in which a Jew was introduced by the author does not prove that they were held in great esteem. There was a good deal of ill feeling between the Jews and Muslims; the debate between a Jew and a Christian was always characterised by as much bitterness as the quarrel between a Shia and a Sunni. Often in the debates, the Christians were silenced by the Jews who disbelieved the virgin birth of Jesus nor did they accept Jesus as a prophet.

So far as Akbar was concerned, he had not much respect for Judaism as could be gathered from

10 Jahanara saw the glass panes of Khwabag of Akbar decorated with paintings of Buddha. Butenschon, Life of a Mughal Princess, p 87.

the story of the philosopher turning a stick into eight serpents and reducing the eight serpents into the former stick by means of magic.[1] The Jews claimed a prophethood for Moses and based the greatness of Moses on his miracles by which they were charmed. But Akbar almost entirely rejected the so-called miracles of prophets as a class. We have no evidence of any direct contribution of Judaism to the constructive side of Akbar's faith and beliefs inspite of our possession of numerous petty details.[2]

Section VIII—The Christians at the Court of Akbar

General Remarks :

Akbar's first acquaintance with the Christians dates as far back as 1572-73 on the occasion of his conquest of Guzrat. The Portuguese had come to India about three quarters of a century back. Within this short period of time they made their influence felt in the south-west coast; their naval proficiency made them indispensable to many of the coastal states of India from Guzrat to the Bay of Bengal. No doubt they had come in pursuance of trade, but when they found opportunities for employment in different states, they gladly accepted them. During his Guzrat conquest, Akbar was

[1] Dabistan, Vol. II, Section II, Chap. X.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 71.

convinced of the superiority of their naval mechanism and art. As a shrewd man of affairs, he was not blind to the significance of the Portuguese occupations in the south,[1] which was at once the seat of piracy and trade combined.

As is usual with the European nations, along with these traders and adventurers also came the priests and missionaries, mostly Jesuits, with all their zeal for making new converts.

During the seize of Surat in 1573, the Portuguese came to the defence of the city. Finding resistance useless Dom Antonio De Noronha[2] sent Antonio Cabral "with instruction to make peace." As was usual with Akbar, he did not refuse the proposal for peace. In his unbounded curiosity Akbar "made enquiries about the wonders of Portugal and the manners of Europe." About 1576, two Jesuit missionaries came to Bengal, Anthony Vaz and Peter Dias. Their personal character made favourable impressions on Akbar. The Emperor sent for the Vicar-General of Bengal, Julian Pereira, to question him about the Christian people, their civilization and religion. Accidentally this was the period when the Ibadat Khana had been built, and heated discussions amongst the

1 The Portuguese occupations during that period were Goa, Chambal, Bombain, Bassein, Daman, Dieu ; their fleet controlled the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf; the pilgrim traffic of Muslims also was in their hands to a large extent.

2 For Dom Antonio's details, see Hosten, Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1912, p. 217.

different sects of Islam were continuing and the ken of vision of Akbar was from day to day, growing wider and wider. The limits of any circumscribed sectarian doctrines could hardly meet the ever expanding demands of the soul of the great Seeker. The Vicar General Julian was not educated enough to satisfy the cravings of Akbar. In 1576, one Pietro Tavaers, a Portuguese officer in his employ, also proved useless for the purpose of Akbar.

By 1578, the relation between the Imperial governor and the Portuguese authorities of Goa became very much strained. The Viceroy Dom Antonio Cabral, who had concluded the former peace in 1573, was sent to negotiate again. At Fatehpur Sikri, the Emperor had a talk with him about the Christian civilisation and faith. But he also could not improve upon the information already supplied by his predecessors. The Vicar General suggested that the Emperor might invite the Christian Fathers from Goa who would be able to give him the information that he might require about Christianity.[3]

Accordingly, the king sent one of his officers Haji Abdulla Khan with his interpreter Dominio Parez to bring the learned men of Christianity from Goa. The motive of Akbar in inviting the

[3] Payne, Akbar and the Jesuits,, p. 16. Du Jarric says that Julian had some disputes with the Mullas regarding religion.

missionaries may be beautifully read in the text of the Farman issued to the Priests at Goa.[4]

There is a good deal of controversy amongst historians regarding the motives of Akbar in inviting the Portuguese missionaries from Goa. The colour which has been given to the motive of Akbar, has been according to the angle from which historians have looked at the religious changes of the Emperor. The Muslim historians generally interpreted history in terms of facts. They concentrated their interest on the actions of monarch and not on the course of events or on their currents and cross currents. So the Muslim historians rested content with the letter of invitation and they did not supply us with any clue to the motive of Akbar except indirectly and incidentally. The Portuguese writers of this period were as a class not historians and their writings were generally confined to religious reports and despatches. The Jesuit missionaries did not often care to verify the truth of the information which came to them. Stories came to them and the Fathers accepted them in all credulity and put them in their despatches. Often they could not follow the native language in the absence of an interpreter; often they did not verify the half understood facts but merely entered them in their letters and despatches. To the later historians, they serve as materials of history.

[4] For text of the Farman, see post, pp. 186-87.

European writers generally treat these materials as invaluable sources of history. But without minimising their historical importance, we would suggest that they should be taken very cautiously; firstly because they were not political documents; secondly they were at variance with one another; thirdly they have not been properly annotated; further they are not yet complete. We may accept them as materials for history when they are supported by other evidences either direct or highly circumstantial. As for example Vasco da Gama's description of the land of Zamorin;[5] he saw the Hindu priests with their white dress, blowing conch-shells and lighting candles and lamps at the altar, and Vasco da Gama mistook them for Christian priests. He remarked in his Travels that in the 15th century, there were Christian churches and priests in the land of Zamorin. It took Europe about 200 years to correct the mistake to which Vasco da Gama led the historians. During the reign of Akbar, the Fathers heard so many stories, wrote so many letters and sent so many despatches that they made their confusion worse confounded. On their way to Sikri, one of the Fathers heard that Akbar had issued orders for the destruction of all mosques. Another learnt that Akbar had given up all his wives keeping only one and distributed the rest amongst his courtiers. A third remarked

[5] See discussions in the Introduction.

that Akbar was going to Goa to be baptised but he could not do so in the capital for fear of a rebellion. Some heard at Bijapur that Akbar died a Christian.[6]

The credulity of the foreigners only excites laughter and needs no comment. The Fathers came to convert the Emperor and they were too eager to have stories saying that Akbar had separated from Islam.

And there are historians who put faith in the Portuguese versions as much religiously as did the Fathers in the Gospels. One such is the famous Dr. V. A. Smith. Whenever there was a wide difference between the Portuguese versions and native versions, he rejected the native ones because they were not written by the Fathers. Smith's references to original Portuguese sources are very wide in many places, and he had not properly handled the sources even when it was not difficult for him to do so. He laid immense weight on the Jesuit testimony in his work 'Akbar the Great Moghul;' so his investigations of the Jesuit sources ought to have been more thorough. Payne is very right when he remarked that "the perfunctory nature of Smith's investigations is all the more astonishing in view of the immense weight attached to Jesuit testimony." Smith's references are often misleading and inaccurate like

[6] For a detailed description on this point, see Hakluyat Society Journal, 1888, Vol. II, Part I, 252.

those of Dr. Gastav Von Buchwald who had compiled the unfinished volume of Von Noer's 'Kaiser Akbar.' The peculiar mentality of Smith when he rejected the authority of Abul Fazl on the capture of Asirgarh as 'forgery and wilful distortion of facts' has evoked strong censure from recent writers of Jesuit history.[7] Smith often refers to 'Relacam' but he had not had more than a fragmentary acquaintance with Guerreiro's work and, therefore, he often committed mistakes while referring to it. His note on Relacam is very inaccurate. Similarly Dr. Gustav Von Buchwald cannot be excused for the damagingly wrong versions of Akbar which he gave apparently bearing on Relacam. His study was so shallow that he mistook the very identity of Akbar and Jahangir and the facts of one have been thrust on the shoulder of the other.

Jahangir invented a method of sealing letters with the images of Christ and the Virgin. But Dr. Gustav took this method of sealing letters as having been invented by Akbar and on this flimsy datum, he built up a theory that "Akbar regarded himself as of higher rank than Christ." In Chap. IX Dr. Gustav introduced the story of a discussion in which Akbar was the chief speaker on the divinity of Christ, but it took place two years after his death. Dr. Gustav ante-dated this discussion by

[7] Payne, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p. XXXV.

some twelve years, making it occur on the 5th May, 1595, the date on which the third mission reached Akbar's court.[8] Further mistake of Dr. Gustav was that he made Guerreiro one of the disputants whereas Guerreiro was not a missionary and was never in the East. Such instances of colossal mistakes of the modern authors who depended wholly on the Jesuit versions might be multiplied. Only we shall mention Smith, for he is regarded as the most important authority on Akbar. Smith relied on Du Jarric's Historia and has taken it as a piece of history. But if Smith had gone through the first few pages of his work more carefully, he would have found from Du Jarric's own version that he did not claim himself to be a historian. H's 'Historia' is in no sense an original work and "it is from the first to last a compilation, a series of extracts and abstracts from the writings of others." Du Jarric himself tells us that he wanted to compile a history of the Jesuit missions and not of the country in which they were located.

To quote Payne, "Historia is essentially a religious work, religious both in theme and treatment, and as such, not as treatise on general history, it must be regarded."[9] To treat the facts mentioned therein as infallible evidence

[8] Payne, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p. xxxiv.

[9] *Ibid*, Introduction, p. xxxix. For detailed criticism, see Payne's Introduction.

of history, as has been done by Smith, is unhistorical.[10]

On the whole, the nature of the missionary work determined the scope of missionary writings. Their writings were meant to keep the authorities informed of the progress they had made in their mission, namely the condition of Akbar's mind, the possibility of his conversion and the chance of spreading the Gospel in the land of 'the great Mogor.' The reports were full of gossips relating to Akbar's so-called apostasy; up to the moment of his death, the missionaries had a lurking hope of converting him to Christianity. Akbar's sympathetic attitude and the respect shown to Father Aquaviva were mistaken by the Fathers who had only the knowledge of European religious intolerance of the 16th century and who could not dream of such liberalism of a non-Christian, unless he was a confirmed believer in the doctrines of Christianity. Similarly the Mullas, who believed that truth was the monopoly of Islam alone, misjudged Akbar because he was liberal enough to find more or less truth in all religions as was done by Chengiz. So we find much similarity between the Portuguese

[10] But it must be said to the credit of Du Jarric that he compared Historia of Guzman and Relacam of Guerriero; he is much more judicious and methodical though a bit more moralising.

and Mulla versions of the story [11] though their angle of vision was different, their interpretations were the same. But the real Akbar lies behind the bars of the cage built by the Jesuit Clergy and Muslim Mullas.

Now to resume, what was the motive that lay behind Akbar's invitation of the Jesuit Fathers? Some say that the motive was purely political. According to them, Akbar did not like the domination of the Indian seas by the Portuguese; their control of the eastern maritime traffic was offensive to Akbar, the humiliation to which the pilgrims to Mecca were subjected, were too annoying to the Emperor, and Akbar's motive was "to turn them neck and crop out of India." As the matter was not easy, Akbar had recourse to "a tortuous policy of diplomacy and friendship combined" [12] "His friendly missions, sent avowedly with the innocent object of acquiring religious instructions and purchasing European curiosities, had a sinister political purpose also, and were utilised as means of espionage." As is mentioned in De Sousa, there was a suspicion in the minds of the governor of Goa that 'the Fathers

[11] Father Xavier, whose letters generally supplied the sources of Du Jarric, wrote in a letter of Dec 4, 1615, that Akbar had embraced Hinduism and died in that faith. This mistake on the part of one who was present in the third mission and who could see things for himself, betrays a lack of knowledge of contemporary events and as such should not be taken as reliable source of history.

[12] Smith, Akbar, p. 202.

might be kept as hostages.'[13] According to Maclagan, Akbar wanted the Jesuit Fathers to be used as priests for religious services to his European employees,[14] Maclagan further suggests on the authority of Catrou[15] that Abul Fazl, finding that Islam could not be made a national religion in India, advised Akbar to give Christianity a chance. Maclagan made too much of this fantastic theory and asserted that before the introduction of Din-i-Ilahi, Akbar wanted to experiment upon India a third religion besides Hinduism and Islam. Maclagan's view is untenable in view of the fact that if Akbar's motive was political unity based on religious unity, he should not have allowed religious freedom to all. Some Fathers in their wild conjectures suggest that Christianity was predestined for India and Akbar wanted to give a chance in advance to what was inevitable. The absurdity of the proposition is too apparent to need any comment. To them 'wish is the father of thought.'

But Payne with much greater sanity attempted to combine 'motif political with motif religious' of

13 De Sousa, Oriente Conquistado, Vol. II, p. 150.

14 This is not justifiable as the number of Chirstians employed in Akbar's service was too small and they were too much scattered in the Empire to demand the services of bishops from Goa. If such motive did at all exist, it must have been mentioned in the text of the Farman.

15 Histoire Generale Edition 1705, p. 96. Abul Fazl had then been 4 years in the court and was a young man of 20, and still a '*bisthi*' only and a full-blooded Muslim, moreover he was never found to have been favourably disposed towards Christianity.

Akbar in inviting the Portuguese missionaries. A close study of the Farman of invitation and a critical view of the phase of Akbar's mind through which he was passing at that period of his life, convince us that the invitation was primarily religious and secondarily political and was in consonance with the spirit which characterised the temperament of Akbar during that period. The period of conquest was practically over ; the influence of the orthodox professors of the Sunni creed was ebbing away ; the Shias had lost their ground owing to their undignified vituperations on the companions of the Prophet and on the Sunnis. The Zoroastrian Dastur Mahyarji Rana had dazzled Akbar by his personal magnetism ; and the Brahmins and Yogis, with this century-old philosophy and the *Tantras*, had made a favourable impression on his mind ; their sacred books had filtered into Akbar's mind through translation.

Stray acquaintance made with lay Christians did not satisfy the insatiable thirst for knowledge of the Sufi mind of Akbar—lover of wisdom as he was by nature.[16] He now desired to have his ken of vision expanded and enlightened through discourses with the Christian priests whose Sacred Books had been referred to in the Quran as Ahli Kitab or the Revealed Books. If the invitation

[16] Blochmann says, " Akbar was a Sufi at heart," p. 210.

to Tulsidas, Dadu, Surdas, Mahayarji Rana or Ram Das before the Farman to Goa, or to Hiravijaya and Bhanuchandra after, had not been actuated by political motives, what reason have we to surmise a poiltical motive behind the invitation to the Christians ? It may be that there were political relations between the Mughals and the Portuguese, and that inspite of the existence of the religious missionaries at court, political amity was not established. (Akbar like Asok had not ceased to be a king because he had become a religious devotee.) The co-existence of religious and political relations did not deprive Akbar of the sincerity that lay behind the spirit of the invitation. Specially the way in which Akbar received the missionaries on their arrival and treated them during their stay, did not justify the remark that 'a tortuous duplicity' was guiding all the transactions of Akbar in his relations with the Portuguese.

As usual in Europe of the 16th century, the monarchs were almost all seized with the motive of proselytisation, and a wave of religious zeal explains many of their political actions. Behind the action of the political authorities, both politics and religion co-existed. Any one of the two, without the existence of the other, was sufficient enough to decide in favour of the acceptance of the invitation. But so far as the missionaries themselves were concerned, many of them were sincerely anxious for the conversion of 'the great Mogor

and evangelisation of the dominions of the Mogor."[17] At best it was so up to the end of the second mission in 1591. If they were to some extent utilised for political advantage by the Goa authorities, the clergymen were generally unconscious and it was inspite of them. As Moreland observes, " the mission was the combination of the religious and political motives which is the key to all activities of the Portuguese during the sixteenth century and much of their conduct which is inexplicable from traders' point of view finds an excuse though not always a justification in the missionary zeal by which the rulers of the country were distinguished."[18] We do not fully agree with Payne when he says that, " Akbar was influenced by both religious and political motives and the former was quite as strong and real in his case as in theirs." We would rather put it in this way—that Akbar did actually derive some political advantage from his direct contact with the Portuguese missionaries but that it was incidental and was hardly ever premeditated.

On the other hand, Akbar was often misunderstood and misjudged because of the Portuguese aspect of the question There were opinions that from the beginning, the Portuguese had no belief in the conversion of the great Mughal and that the

[17] Similar attempts have been made by the Christians from time to time in the Turki House, see *ante*, Chap. II, p. 62.

[18] Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, p. 200.

mission was entirely political from start to finish. This view has been taken generally by contemporary English trade writers and travellers because they were actuated by a feeling of jealousy and hatred against the Portuguese, who were at this time dominating the Indian seas. According to them, if trade was behind the Portuguese movements, politics must be behind the Emperor's. The perspective of the English merchant man was the *L.-S.-D.* in the 16th century; so they could not follow Portuguese currents in all their details. Of course, the services of the missionaries, at least in the later stages of the missions, were utilised for securing commercial and political privileges. No doubt the plans of the English merchant adventurer Mildenhall who visited Akbar's court in 1603 with the object of obtaining trade facilities for himself and his countrymen were for a time frustrated by the Portuguese missionaries. But to ascribe unalloyed political motive from beginning to end shows absence of knowledge of court events and betrays a lack of insight on the part of early writers like Fitch, Terry and Roe. It is indeed true that it was the political authorities to whom the Farman was sent, because the religious missionaries were under the political control of the governor of Goa and the political authorities at Goa were primarily concerned with the extension of their country's commercial facilities and were fully alive to the political

advantages which might accrue to their trade. So far as the political authorities were concerned, they welcomed the appeal of Akbar 'for instructions in the doctrines of Christianity as much for religious as for political opportunities which it offered.' But the existence of political incentive by no means demonstrates the insincerity of a religious urge. Had diplomacy been the whole issue, a shrewd man like Akbar could easily have had recourse to other means much easier and shorter than this slow, long and tedious process.

Since the beginning of the third mission, the Portuguese missionaries had actually become political agents, and there were occasions when both Father Xavier and Pinherio gave great offence to Akbar, as for example, in the siege of Asirgarh in Khandesh. But Akbar was magnanimous enough to forgive and forget. If his intention was to punish them, it was so easy for him. The Portuguese missionaries lost their prestige in the estimation of both the rulers and the ruled when they meddled in politics. So long as the mission was represented by men like Rudolf Aquaviva, they commanded the respect of all and sundry, but the Fathers who followed, were as unworthy of their sacred trust, as were the Qazis of the Mughal Empire. By the time of Shah Jahan, they ceased to be any thing more than political hirelings in clergymen's gown and were treated by the Mughal authorities as such. Our conclusion is that the

motive of Akbar in 1580 was primarily religious as was that of the missionaries that composed the first mission; but the motives of the Portuguese authorities at Lisbon and Goa were primarily political. The advantages derived by Akbar were much less in proportion to the religious objectives gained by the political authorities and as such they flattered themselves that they were serving the cause of Jesus.

The First Mission

1580-83 A.D.

The Farman :

" In the name of God.
Letter of Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar, King placed in the seat of God.
To the Chief priests of the Order of St. Paul.
Be it known to them that I am a great friend of theirs.

I have sent thither Abdullah my ambassador, and Domenico Perez, in order to invite you to send back to me with them two of your learned men, who should bring the books of the law, and above all the Gospels, because I truly and earnestly desire to understand their perfection; and with great urgency I again demand that they should come with my ambassador aforesaid, and bring their books. For from their coming I shall obtain the utmost consolations ; they will be dear to me,

and I shall receive them with every possible honour. As soon as I shall have become well instructed in the law, and shall have comprehended its perfection, they will be able, if willing to return at their pleasure, and I shall send them back with great honours and appropriate regards. Let them not fear me in the least, for I receive them under my pledge of good faith and assure them concerning myself."

With the above Farman of invitation Abdulla Khan reached Goa in September, 1579, and was received with honours reserved for the royal governors of Portugal. The motive behind such honours was apparent. For reasons both political and religious the invitation was accepted. Rudolf Aquaviva and Monserrate, along with a converted Persian Christian Eenriquez to work as interpreter, formed the mission.[19]

They started on the 17th day of November, 1579, and reached Sikri on the last day of February, 1580. The splendid reception offered by the Emperor was typically Mughal in grandeur. The King in order to show honour to the priests appeared in Portuguese costume, a unique honour indeed. He assigned them residence in the royal palace, though at a later stage they changed their abode themselves to a lonely quarter

[19] For a short life of Aquaviva, see Smith, Akbar, p. 170 and for Monserrate, p. 171.

of the city. Their food was supplied from the royal table. They were exempted from offering the customary prostration when visiting the Emperor.[20] In the court, they had their seats by the royal cushion. Often the Emperor would show much familiartiy by taking walks with Aquaviva with arms on his shoulder. The King was so anxious to talk to them that on the very night of their arrival, he kept them questioning till 2'oclock in the morning.[21]

Akbar accepted a copy of the Bible with respect and also some pictures which he kissed. He had also a chapel built for them in the palace. He placed Prince Murad under the tuition of Monserrate, while Abul Fazl instructed Monserrate in Persian.

We have no formal record of the debates between the Mullas and the priests, as we have not of any of those that had been held amongst the doctors of different faiths except what we get in the Dabistan-ul-Mazahib. Stray references in the Dabistan, the extracts from the reports of the Fathers and the pictures of the Mughal court acquaint us with some details of the nature of their conversations and debates. The day of

[20] The Sijdah was not compulsory for all. The Sayids were exempted from it. Akbarnama, III, Beveridge, p. 399.

[21] This extreme impatience for conversation with the priests is only an outward expression of the storm that was raging in the mind of Akbar.

their arrival passed in reception, formal exchange of greetings and private interviews with Akbar. On the 18th of March, the first formal debate was held, the second on the 4th and the third on the 6th of April. After that there is no chronological mention of debates. We have no definite information as to the exact points raised and discussed in different debates. But the nature and subject-matter of the debates have been gathered from the contemporary letters and despatches. The main point of Aquaviva was that when "Muhammad had acknowledged the divine origin of the Gospel, he was inconsistent in refusing to acknowledge the divinity of Christ." Further he contended, "the Gospel having been foretold in the Old Testament must be superior to the Quran which was not."[22]

The subsequent points of disputes were:—(*i*) the character of Muhammad's heaven, (*ii*) the outside witnesses of Christ's divinity, (*iii*) the two natures of Christ and (*iv*) the inconsistency of the Quran in its varying attitude towards the character of Christ's death.

De Sousa adds certain other subjects of debates:—(*v*) the absurdity of imputation that Christians had tampered with the text of the Bible, (*vi*) the doctrine of Trinity and Incarnation, (*vii*) the personal life and views of Muhammad.

[22] Commentaries, Memoirs, A. S. B, 1914, p. 24 (*b*).

The Fathers generally used very strong words in their debates regarding Muhammad, and Akbar had to warn them more than once of the danger which they invited by such conduct. However, the priests could not explain the birth of Jesus, who according to them was the son of God and according to Muslims might have been the son of Joseph, the carpenter, with whom Mary was married. They could not fully explain the Trinity.[23]

On the whole the Fathers had a very willing and sympathetic listener in Akbar ; though not himself ready to be converted, he gave permission to the priests to make conversions in the Empire. He himself showed honour to the priests by accepting Christian pictures with reverence. With his sons and courtiers, he visited their chapel and had the Bible translated by Abul Fazl. In the translation he asked Abul Fazl to use :—"*Ai name vay Gesu Christu,*" instead of usual '*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim,*' in order to create a Christian atmosphere in the subject of study of Christian doctrine.

This liberal attitude of Akbar's mind towards the Christian Fathers and the concessions given to them in various ways have been interpreted by the

[23] The famous story of the fire ordeal between the Muslims and Fathers to prove the respective truths of Islam and Christianity needs no comment in the face of the wide difference of the facts as narrated by Badauni and by Monserrate. See Beveridge's note in Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 368.

orthodox Muslims as his virtual lapse from Islam.[24] The Christian priests in the despatches during this period gave a favourable impression of Akbar that he was almost willing to be converted to Christianity but for the fact he would have to give up all his wives if he became a Christian.[25] Some asserted that Akbar promised to become a Christian if they could prove the Divine birth of Jesus and explain to him the significance of Trinity.[26] Monserrate went so far as to say that Akbar promised to become a Christian even if it would lead to his abdication only if the Priests could explain to him Trinity and he promised to go to Goa for conversion on the pretext of pilgrimage to Mecca.[27] Similar gossips—half-sense, and nonsense—were sent to Goa and to Europe partly owing to the misreading of Akbar's mind and temperament and partly for the pupose of showing that the mission was actually doing

[24] The attitude of the ladies of the harem towards Christianity was not what the priests deserved or desired Akbar's mother 'to whom he denied nothing' wanted Akbar to tie the Bible round the neck of an ass and show about the town of Agra, just as the Christians tied a copy of the Quran round the neck of a horse and showed it round the town of Ormuz; but Akbar refused the request of his mother saying, "if it were ill in the Portuguese to do so to the Al-Coran it became not a King to requite ill with ill, for that the contempt of any religion was the contempt of God and he would not be revenged upon an innocent Book."

[25] Laval, Hakluyat Soc Journal 1888, Part I, p 252.

[26] Maclagan, *op. cit*, pp. 33-34

[27] Monserrate, Mem. A. S. B, Vol. III, 1914 folio 42(*a*)

their part of the work successfully. If the priests who were so near to Akbar could make such conjectures, the ordinary people living far away may be excused, if they made even wider conjectures regarding the religious views of that august monarch. The Mullas in their bigotry and disgust, and people in their ignorance and blindness interpreted his liberal tendencies as having been actuated if not by love for Christianity, at least by hatred towards Islam. Just at that time rebellions were raging in Bengal and Behar in the East and in the Punjab and Kabul in the West.[28] During that psychological moment of unrest and uncertainty, many a wild rumour got current which added fuel of religious discontent to the flames of civil war engineered by the disgruntled jagirdars, ejected Qazis and soldiers whose pay had been reduced. According to Guerreiro, Akbar stopped all corres-

[28] Monserrate, commentaries, Mem. A S. B., Vol. III, 1914 Folio 42(*a*) said that the rebellion was against Akbar's leaning towards Christianity. Smith, on the basis of the Jesuit testimony, said that these rebellions were religious in origin. But is this all correct ? The rebellion began in January, 1580, for which preparations had been going on for some time past Priests came on 28th February, 1580. So there can be no causal connection between the attitude of Akbar towards Christianity and the rebellion May be that at a later stage more fury was added to the rebellion owing to concessions having been granted to the Christians To accelerate the movement of the rebellion, the Mullas gave wide publicity to Akbar's leniency to Christianity. The priests, too, misinterpreted the liberalism of Akbar and embodied the popular gossips into their despatches and flattered themselves that they were winning the great Mughal to the *Cross* from the *Crescent*.

pondence with the priests for allaying the discontent of the public. But we do not know wherefrom Guerreiro got his information. In the very same portrait where we meet Aquaviva, Hiravijay also occurs. Hiravijaya came in 1582 ; so the discussion must be dated not before 1582 ; thus Guerreiro is not correct. If Akbar stopped correspondence out of fear, Akbar would not have taken Monserrate with him as a tutor of Murad to Lahore.

On the way to Lahore, Akbar asked Monserrate to explain to him :—

(1) Why did not Jesus come from the Cross if he was the Son of all powerful God ?

(2) Why did Christ allow St. Thomas to put his hands into his wounds ?

(3) What was meant by sitting at the right hand of God ?

(4) Celebacy of the Clergy.

(5) The Last Judgment.

(6) The Status of Paraclets.

(7) The relation between the Quran and the Gospels.

After return from Lahore the discussions continued again, the subject-matter being (*a*) the attitude of the Quran towards unbelievers, (*b*) distinction between Grace and Faith, (*c*) the Sonship of Christ.

Back to Sikri, the Emperor adopted some of the rituals and formalities of the Christians such as

'Bells'; as he had adopted the '*Rakhi*' of the Hindus and '*Quesek*' of the Zoroastrians.

At that time the relation between the Portuguese at Goa and the Mughal Governor in Guzrat had become definitely strained. Rudolf Aquaviva informed the Emperor of this quarrel between the Portuguese and the Mughals, and Akbar was "shocked at the news." Smith in his work made too much of this quarrel and attempted to prove 'the perfidy of Akbar' as early as February, 1580. Says he, "at the very moment when the missionaries were approaching his court in response to the friendly invitation addressed to the Viceroy and other authorities of Goa, he had organised his army to capture the European ports."[29] Smith very intelligently wove the facts concealing the point of sore between the two. It was not the Mughals that opened hostilities but the Portuguese. Gulbadan Begam in 1575 was proceeding to Mecca but the Portuguese detained her ship near Daman and compelled her to cede to them the village of Butsar. When the Begam returned from Mecca, she ordered the Imperial officers 'to retake the village.' Kutubuddin, the Governor, attacked Daman where the village of Butsar was situated. This was a petty affair and even Monserrate admitted that 'the ordinary quarrels between the Muhammadans and the Portuguese developed into avowed hostilities.' When the position of the Portuguese was reduced to difficult straits,

the Fathers were informed of this and Aquaviva complained to the Emperor who was really ' shocked to hear the news ' and he regretted very much that the hostilities had begun. He said that ' he had no knowledge of the affair ' and ' Kutubuddin, as a senior official of a high rank, had acted on his own initiative.' The Fathers desired that the Emperor should rebuke the Governor which Akbar refused to do, for as he said, ' he could not well censure his viceroy for acts done with the intention of serving the public interest.' Inspite of the fact that Akbar knew the guilt of the Portuguese of Daman in compelling Gulbadan to renounce Butsar, inspite of the fact that the Portuguese were committing piracies in the Western Seas, inspite of the disadvantages to which the pilgrims were subjected by the Portuguese the Emperor was gracious enough to send orders recalling the troops from Daman; his commands were obeyed immediately.[30]

[30] If Akbar was actuated by a motive of destruction of the Portuguese he was powerful enough to do so Akbar once sent Todar Mal in 1572 " to submit report as to how the port (Surat) could be taken. He reported that the capture of the fort could be very easily effected " (Akbarna na, III, Bib. Indica, Beveridge, p 24) His fleet, as is given by Mukherjee (Indian Shipping, II, Ch. II), shows that it commanded strength enough to sink their entire fleet into the sea If his intention was all perfidious, he should not have ordered Kutubuddin to recall his troops from Daman. Smith wanted that Akbar would be as docile as a Mughal Emperor after the Dewani of 1765, so that the Portuguese would have an easy go into the main land Smith would have been glad if Akbar would have been lost into the sea of religious discussion with the priests while the Empire be sliced off the Indian seas by the Portuguese pirates.

The mission stayed in India for 3 years and they grew impatient when they saw that Akbar was moving like a mirage. At times they found him so near to Christianity that they thought his conversion only a matter of hours and days. They more than once proposed conversion, but Akbar instead of a curt and blank refusal put the matter off without offending the feelings of the priests. When after three years of continuous efforts 'the great Mogor' was not converted, the Provincial of Goa grew impatient and asked the Fathers to return 'with a discretion to stay, if they found it desirable.'

The immediate occasion for the break-up of the mission was the active part which Akbar took in a discussion between the Mullas and the Priests, in favour of the former [31] in defence of Islam. Though for some time the actual break-up of the mission was postponed owing to the intervention of Abul Fazl, the final dissolution was only a question of days. Aquaviva desired to go back to Goa but Akbar wanted him to stay. In the end, it was mutually arranged that Akbar should send an embassy to Europe to congratulate Philip II of Spain on his accession to the throne of Portugal and that Father Monserrate would form a member of the party along with Abdulla Khan and Muzaffar Khan. By then, Akbar had received an embassy from Queen Elizabeth of England who sent one

[31] Du Jarric, Payne's Translation, p. 35.

Newbury with a request that he might be "honestly intreated and received" and promised "to recompose the same with as many deserts as we can." [32] Father Aquaviva was allowed to return to Goa in May, 1583, on condition that he would return to Sikri after some time.[33]

Was the mission a failure ?

We think it was not, at least compared to what happened of the missions to Chengiz, Timur, or Kublei Khan. The distinct services rendered by the missions were :—

(1) Permission was granted to make converts and build Churches.

(2) Permission was granted to build hospitals in India.

(3) Portuguese prestige in the central and local

[32] Fitch, p. 44. The political object of their embassy was to form a league against the Khalifa of Rum, who was a natural enemy of the Christians of Europe. Another embassy was to be sent to the Pope, the leader of Christianity; the motive might have been to secure an ally against Rum Already Akbar had repudiated the Khelafat pretensions of Constantinople and declared himself Khalifa-uz-Zaman and his Kingdom as Dar-ul-Khelafat This proposed embassy to Spain and Rome was corollary to the recitation of the Khutba and issue of the 'Mahzar' of 1579.

[33] He returned with a family of Russian slaves in the service of the harem. Aquaviva was killed by a mob near Salsette soon after. Du Jarric, Payne's Translation, p. 43.

It is interesting to know that Akbar had an adopted son, a Christian boy named Zulqarnain; he was brought up in the harem with great care. He ultimately became a governor of a province in the time of Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

government was increased by the stay of the Fathers at the Imperial Court.

(4) Their stay encouraged other nations of Europe to try their luck in the land of the Mughals.

The Second Mission

1591 A. D.

After the departure of the first mission in 1583, there was a lull in the Christian activities for about 7 years till 1590. Possibily the death of Aquaviva at the hands of the mob served as a brake to the march of the missions. During this period only two Christians, Newbury and Fitch, are heard of at Fatehpur Sikri; but their object was not religious.[34] In 1590, one Greek sub-deacon named Leo Grimon on his way back to his country, appeared at the royal court at Lahore. Abul Fazl pictured Grimon as a man of sense and knowledge. He received high honours, and was put in charge of translation of some Greek books. During that period many Firingis and Armenians arrived at the court. On his way back, Grimon was charged with two letters addressed to

[34] Only two letters of 1590 and of 1591 by the Provincial at Goa and the General Secretary at Rome supply us information regarding the events of the period These letters have been reproduced in J.R A S, 1896, Vol. LXV, pp. 62-63. The first letter of 1590 spoke of the arrival of the mission and its departure and that of 1591 narrated its failure.

the Viceroy of Goa and to the head of the Society. The letters are really beautiful and are much more strongly-worded than the one preceding the first mission. Grimon asserted that the prospects of the mission were favourable. He further advanced that the King had destroyed the minarets and mosques which were being used as stables. The King 'dismissed all his wives and shew genuine respect for Christianity.' [35] Akbar even celebrated the day of assumption of Virgin in 1590 by bringing out and paying respects to 'Our Own Lady.' [36] The report of Grimon roused enthusiasm of the Fathers of Goa to a pitch and there were innumerable applications for appointment to the missions even from the students of the College. Unfortunately two Fathers, Edward Leioton and Chistopher di Vega, and a lay Brother were chosen along with a Brother Estavas Rillerio.

Work of the Mission

The mission was very honourably received by the King. They were provided with residence in the royal palace. All necessaries of life were

35 The story of dismissal and distribution of his wives was fantastic. Possibly Grimon misunderstood the regulation of 1587 when Akbar issued his 'Ains' regulating the marriage. 'In no case men should marry more than one wife unless the woman is barren or diseased'

36 Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 48. Smith, Akbar, p 253

supplied from the royal household. A school was started under their direction for the royal children and children of the nobility. The report of the Provincial written in November, 1591, showed that the Fathers were given definite instructions not to leave the court without completing their work or without the express permission of the superior authorities. But inspite of the instructions the missionaries suddenly returned to Goa within one year of their arrival.

The reason for this sudden break-up of the mission is not mentioned anywhere. Maclagan suggests that the Fathers returned when they were opposed by a strong section at the court and when they thought that the King had no intention of accepting baptism. As Smith suggests, it is possible that the Fathers were 'faint-hearted.' These Fathers were not fit to take up the task for which they had been sent. On the report of Grimon, the Fathers had probably concluded that Akbar's mental conversion was already complete and he was only waiting for a priest to convert him formally by giving baptism. They grew impatient when they found that the chance of conversion was every day growing remoter and remoter. Unfortunately for the Fathers, the Emperor was at that time very busy with wars in Sind and had no time to listen to the debates on religion or to attend to their sermons. They took it as apathy or antipathy towards

Christianity and soon lost heart in the work and retired.

The second mission was entirely fruitless.

The Third Mission

1595-1605 A. D.

The sudden collapse of the second mission created great dissatisfaction amongst the authorities at Goa as well as at Rome. Akbar, too, was not at all pleased with the way in which the Fathers fled away from their post. However, he was courteous enough to extend a fresh invitation through an Armenian Christian. The Viceroy was eager to accept the invitation, of course for political reasons though the religious motive was not altogether absent. The Provincial was hesitating owing to the failure of the previous missions. Ultimately with the consent of the authorities of Goa, the invitation was accepted and the acceptance was subsequently ratified by the King of Spain.

This time men were chosen very cautiously for reasons both political and religious, and the choice fell on Father Jerome Xavier, Father Emmanuel Pinherio and Brother Benedict of Goes with an Armenian guide who had conducted the tour of Rudolf Aquaviva.

The mission started on December 4, 1594, and on the way met Murad, but he took no interest in the doctrines. Du Jarric says, "He had no respect

for the mosques of Muhammad which he seldom attended."[37] After a strenuous journey covering over 5 months, they reached Lahore on the 5th of May, 1595.

The history of the Third Mission may be conveniently studied in three well-defined periods till the end of Akbar's life as Mclagan has done :

1. Lahore period ... Three years and 6 months.
2. Tourist period ... Two years and 6 months.
3. Agra period ... Four years and 6 months.

Unlike on previous occasions, the King avoided frequent religious discussion for he feared misunderstanding unless the Fathers could follow Persian. During that time discussion on various topics was pursued The recent Portuguese conquest of Chaul excited admiration of Akbar. The King of Spain took much interest in the progress of the mission,[38] 'for their services to God and man.' Akbar showed, in his usual catholicity, a good deal of leniency in his dealings with the priests. He gave them seats near the cushion reserved for himself, and the Prince attended their chapel, showed reverence to pictures and clasped his hands. He went on his knees like a Christian prince when the priests recited their Litanies, wore the reliquary, which had the Virgin portrayed on one side and Angus Dei on the other. He showed his collection of European books and

37 Du Jarric, p. 57.

38 Rehatsek, Calcutta Review, LXXXII, 1883, p. 9.

gave them for the use of the priests. A school was started for the royal children at Lahore which exercised some influence over a number of Princes. He gave written permission to baptise all those who liked to be baptised. Salim has been portrayed as "a firm friend and protector of the mission."

Though regular religious debates were no longer held, " disputes occasionally took place and we hear of Akbar setting his ' Chronoligist ' to dispute with Father Xavier regarding the possibilities of God having a son."

During that period the description of Akbar as given by the Christians definitely portrayed Akbar as a non-Muslim. "At Lahore there was no mosque and no copy of the Quran; people were killed for killing cows." Whatever the King's actual faith was, it was not Islam. He was a Hindu (*Gentile*). He followed the tenets of Jains (*vertas*) He worshipped the Sun like the Parsees He was the founder of a new faith (*secta pestilens et perniciosa*) and wished to obtain the name of the Prophet. He had already some followers, but these were only obtained by bribery (*sued auro corruptus*). Nothing was further from him, at any rate, than the religion of Muhammad."[10] This picture of Akbar is rather modelled on the information supplied by Leo

[9] Maclagan, *op cit.*, p. 54.

[10] Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 55. Compare Badauni, II, p. 204-206 Ain, Blochmann, Ain., Vol. I, p. 204, and Finherio as quoted by Smith, p. 262.

Grimon and looks like translation of Badauni. The motives of both were the same, namely to paint Akbar as an apostate; though from different angles, the lines of force met at one point. A man from outside, who did not understand the tendency of the Emperor, confused the eclecticism of manners and customs with the religion itself; they misunderstood the shell for substance. The reason for this portraiture served a twofold purpose, namely to show that 'the great Mogor had ceased to be a Muslim' and that the void caused by his lapse from Islam might be filled up by Christianity. That Akbar was a Muhammadan following the incumbent Islamic religious duties is proved by the fact of his offering prayer personally after the death of Abul Fath Gilani and of Nizamuddin during and after the period of which Leo Grimon spoke.

In 1597, while Akbar sat on the throne of his palace at Lahore celebrating the festival of the Sun, 'fire came down from heaven.'[41]

The missionaries were so superstitious that they attributed the fire 'to the anger of Heaven at the King's irreligious presumption.' After the fire, Akbar is said to have repaired to Kashmir and took with him Father Xavier and Brother Goes. It is suggested by Smith that after the fire of Lahore Akbar ceased to apostatize and returned to

[41] Maclagan, *op cit.*, p. 55. Du Jarric, Payne's Translation, p. 74.

Islam.[42] Of course, owing to the illness of both the priests there was no progress for sometime in their work. By November, 1597, the priests returned. On his way back Salim was attacked by a lioness but ' was saved by the Saviour's will,' as Jarric says, " in order that the Church might increase and many souls win salvation."[43]

The Fathers had by now completed two years but the much desired conversion of Akbar inspite of his acceptance of some of the Christian rituals was as distant as ever. But the King of Spain asked them ' to remain by the spot no matter one died or re-called.' Von Noer suggested that Akbar did not accept Christianity as he was disgusted to hear of the Inquisition at Goa.[44] But as Maclagan admits, there is nothing on the records to show that he had heard of the Inquisition.[45]

[42] Smith, relying on this story of the fire, built up the theory of the actual lapse of Akbar from Islam for 17 years from 1578 to 1595. If actually Akbar returned to Islam after the fire, it might have been just in the fitness of things that Akbar should have dismissed the Christian mission; instead Akbar took the missionaries to Kashmir and continued his favours to the priests So in our opinion, there was no 'falling off' nor 'coming in' of Akbar so far Islam was concerned.

[43] Payne, *op. cit.*, p. 81. He says, " Prince Salim publicly expressed his devotion to our Lord and our Lady and placed their pictures, on which he delighted to gaze in his own chamber." The more the conversion of Akbar seemed remote, the fairer grew the picture of Salim. The hope of the missionaries was now transferred from the father to the son. Father Xavier hoped, " God would one day work in him a great miracle," meaning ' conversion.' For details see Maclagan, *op. cit.*, Chap. IV.

[44] Von Noer, Kaiser Akbar, Vol. I, p. 486.

[45] Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 66, footnote 17.

Tourist Period (1598-1601)

Akbar though an old man now, personally went to the Deccan campaign and as usual, took Father Xavier with him ; Brother Goes remained at Agra. He was much troubled by the people but the authorities protected him. During that time (July 1599) Father Xavier complained that in course of a conversation, the Emperor " had shown much impatience and did not listen to the Christian priests properly." But Akbar had been struck with the death of Prince Murad just a month before and it was not possible for him to attend to the discourses with the same zeal and fervour with which he began them and of which we heard so much.

But soon after, the Emperor had to go to the Deccan where the power of Khandesh was causing him some anxiety. He moved personally. The seige of Asirgarh, the great fort of Khandesh, was a very important point in the history of Portuguese missionary activities in India. Here the political side of the priests' undertaking was revealed in an ugly and unseemly manner. In need of an artillery, Akbar " called on Xavier and Goes to write to the Portuguese at Chaul for guns and munitions but Xavier refused on the plea that such action would be contrary to the Christian faith." The duplicity behind the refusal of Xavier was apparent. According to Du Jarric, the Khandesh forces had no less than seven Portuguese defending

the fort of Asirgarh. Beveridge and Smith suggested that the motive of Akbar behind the Deccan campaign was the complete destruction of the Portuguese and that 'the conduct of Akbar was only a treachery cloaked in friendship towards the Christian priests.'[46] If the conduct of Akbar was foul, we think the same charge is no less applicable to the Christians, who, while professing friendship to the Mughal Emperor and enjoying the Mughal hospitality in all its grandeur and splendour, were using their forces against their hospitable host. This refusal of Father Xavier embittered Akbar so much that he would not permit the Fathers to come to his presence. After the fall of Asirgarh, Akbar, in his usual grace, forgot the duplicity of Xavier and excused the priests—for they were till then too small for Akbar's wrath. During the siege of Asirgarh the seven Portuguese officers were about to be punished cruelly ; but "they were saved by the request of Xavier, to whom they were handed over." Still it is the treachery of Akbar !

Father Pinherio arrived soon after and was received in the same cordial way. Akbar had a discussion with him on the ceremony of the kissing of the Pope's foot by the Holy Roman Emperor and

[46] The one-sided view of Smith regarding the comparative value of the historical accounts of Abul Fazl, Faizi Sarhindi, Xavier and other Christian priests has been completely answered by Payne in his masterly note on Smith's conclusions on the cause of the fall of Asirgarh. Payne, *op. cit.*, Chap. II, note.

the significance attached to this form of obeisance owing to the "Cross worn by the Pope upon his foot."[47]

Before leaving the Deccan, Akbar again sent an embassy to Goa for an alliance "for the despatch of skilled craftsman and for facilities for the purchase of precious stones and other objects."[48] Goes went with the embassy and returned to Agra with Father Antony Machado in 1602.

The Agra Period (1601-05)

Akbar came back to Agra in May, 1601, from the Deccan, soon after Goes and Machado also reached. The number of missionaries was now the largest in Akbar's court. Some time after Pinherio returned to Lahore but not before he had received a Farman.[49] The Farman granted permission to the Christians to 'make conversions, permitting such of his subjects as desired to embrace Christianity to do so without let or hindrance.'[50]

47 Maclagan, *op cit.*, pp. 251-58.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

49 Journal of the Punjab Historical Society, 1916, The Mughal Farman, by Felix Vayle.

50 If Akbar had become a Muslim again after the fire at Lahore, as has been alleged, it is inconsistent to say that he would give a general permission for conversion to Christianity, after his 'coming back.' As we have told before, Akbar neither ceased to be a Muslim nor had he come back. Mirza Azam Khan, who was a member of the Din-i-Ilahi, opposed permission to the Christians for conversion—why? A member of the Din-i-Ilahi remained as much a Muslim as any other follower of the Faith and would hardly tolerate concession to any, other than the members of the brotherhood.

Mirza Azam Khan who was a member of the Din-i-Ilahi strongly protested against the permission.

After the grant of this Farman the priests thought that the task of conversion and evangelisation of 'the land of Mogor' had become easy. But at Lahore they found a strong Viceroy, Quliz Khan, who has been described by the native historian[51] as a pious and learned old man, 'feared in Hindustan as were formerly Nero and Diocletean.' The hatred of the priests could not altogether obliterate the better side of Quliz Khan's character. Quliz Khan treated Pinherio with courtesy, said a priest, 'though he was not treated well at Court.' That Quliz Khan was not very orthodox is proved by the fact that he allowed his wife, son and daughter to visit the church. The opposition which Quliz offered was not against Christianity but against the political designs of the Christians with which Quliz was conversant during his Viceroyalty of Guzrat, and which was gradually becoming prominent, partly owing to the indulgence given by the Emperor at Court. What Quliz Khan would not understand was the attack by the Father on Muhammad and that aroused the Viceroy's frenzy. Hence was the dark picture of Quliz Khan by the priests. Over and above the displeasure of the Muslim Governor, Pinherio was displeased with the Hindus, "for attacking them for their alleged

[51] Ain., I., Blochmann, p. 34.

immorality and infanticide." The Hindus returned hatred by alleging that Christians "ate human flesh and fattened up young men to be sold in Portuguese lands and so forth." [52] The relation between the Christians and the Governor became so much strained that a day was fixed, the 15th September, 1604, for the arrest of all wives and children of the Christians at Lahore. But it could not be carried into effect owing to the transfer of Quliz Khan to Agra. In his absence, his son Sayid Khan and Mirza Abdur Rahim governed. The liberal spirit of Akbar had by then done its work and Sayid Khan was liberal enough to attend the Christian church; he ate with them and listened to their Gospel stories and their discourse upon religious subjects.[53]

When Quliz Khan came back, Pinherio was very glad to see him "forbidding deduction of the usual commission on a grant of a thousand rupees which the Fathers received from Akbar," and expressed great glee at the misfortunes of the Hindus who opposed him for some time back.

At Agra, Father Xavier had opportunity of having discussions with Akbar and we have record of these discussions in Terry's Voyages to East India [54] divided under fourteen heads. But inspite of their best attempts they could not make Akbar

[52] Maclagan, *op cit.*, p. 60.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[54] Terry, A. Voyage to East India, Ed. 1777, pp. 419-22.

believe in the divinity of Christ. He ascribed the miracles of Christ to his knowledge of the science of medicine.

So the troubles of the Christians did not come from the Muslims but from quarters unexpected and unsuspected. At Lahore a group of Armenian Christians began to look upon the Portuguese Fathers with suspicion. The cleavage was created by an English merchant adventurer Mildenhall, who acted as an ambassador from Elizabeth of England to further her political ends. Mildenhall's advent was the signal for a series of quarrels between the Portuguese and the English who coveted entrance into the ports of the Mughals. Inspite of the greatest opposition of the Portuguese Fathers, Akbar was 'merrie enough' to grant the English the right of entrance into the ports of the Mughals in 1604.

Towards the later portion of the third mission when the Fathers found Akbar receding like a mirage, they set their heart on Prince Salim. Probably in the autumn of 1603, after the murder of Abul Fazl, when Salim was in an open rebellion, Father Xavier paid a visit to Salim at Sikri then a deserted city. We have no direct information as to the object of the visit but there is much scope for speculation with regard to the visit.[55] Soon after, we no doubt found Xavier and Machado following Akbar when he was marching against Salim to

[55] Smith, pp. 291-92.

Allahabad. In November, 1604, the happy reconciliation took place between the father and son amidst universal rejoicing. In September, 1605, the Emperor departed from this world, leaving the priests to make their final experiments with the son and to attempt to finish the half-achieved mission of their predecessors.

CHAPTER V

APPENDIX

THE HINDU LEARNED MEN AT THE COURT OF AKBAR

(In the light of Abul Fazl)

Class I. Madhu Saraswati, Madhu Sudhan, Narayan Misra, Hariji Sur, Damodhar Bhat, Ram Tirth, Nara Singh, Parmindra, Aditya.

Class II. Ram Bhadra, Jadrup Narayan.

Class III. Thelogians.

Class IV. Narayan, Madhu Bhatta, Sri Bhatta, Bishnu Nath, Ram Krishna, Balbhadra Misra, Basudev Misra, Baman Bhatta, Bidya Nibas, Gauri Nath, Gopinath, Krishna Pandit, Bhattacharyya, Bhagirath Bhattacharyya, Kashinath Bhattacharyya.

Class V. Bijay Sen Suri, Bhas Chand.*

Physicians.—Mahadev, Bhimnath, Narayan, Siwaji (Tabqat also mentions Bhairam), Durga Mall, Chandra Sen (Surgeon).

Musicians.—Tansen, Baba Ram Das, Sur Das, Ranga Sen.

* Bijay Sen Suri and Bhas Chand have also been mentioned in the list of the Buddhist group.

HINDU COMMANDERS

(*In the light of Tabqat-i-Akbari*)

	Name.	Number in Charge.
1.	Bihari Mal ...	... 5,000
2.	Raja Bhagwan Das	... 5,000
3.	Man Singh ...	... 5,000
4.	Todar Mal ...	... 4,000
5.	Raja Rai Singh Bikanir	... 4,000
6.	Raja Jagannath ...	... 3,000
7.	Raja Askaran ...	... 3,000
8.	Raja Lankaran ...	... 2,000
9.	Madhu Singh (Brother of Man Singh) ...	... 2,000
10.	Raja Kanga ...	... 2,000
11.	Raja Gopal ...	... 2,000
12.	Raja Birbal ...	... 2,000
13.	Raja Surjan ...	... 2,000
14.	Raja Rupsi (Bairagi)	... 1,500
15.	Jagat Singh (Son of Man Singh)	1,500
16.	Rai Monohar ...	... 700 (Ain)
17.	Raj Singh (Son of Askaran)	... 1,000 (Ain)
18.	Rai Patra Das ...	... 700
19.	Ram Das (Kachwaha)	... 500 (Ain)
20.	Medini Rai (Chauhan)	1,000, 700 (Ain)
21.	Raja Bhoj ...	... 1,000

NAMES OF OTHER HINDU OFFICERS MENTIONED IN CONNECTION WITH AKBAR'S MARCH TO AHMEDABAD, 1573

1. Jagannath.
2. Rai Sil.
3. Jagmal Patwar.
4. Birbal (Birbar).
5. Raja Dip Chand.
6. Man Singh Darbari.
7. Ram Das Kachwaha.
8. Ram Chand.
9. Sanwal Das (possibly painter).
10. Jadu Kaith Darbari.
11. Har Das. (Is he Patr Das?)
12. Tara Chand Khawas (painter).
13. Lal Kalanwant. (Is he Mia Lal "musician" of Blochmann, p. 612 ?)
14. Parmanand, a relation of Todar Mal in charge of the fleet (Beveridge Ain., III, p. 97).

CHAPTER VI

THE PERIOD OF LEGISLATION

1575-95 A.D.

In the midst of the sea of religious discussions, Akbar did not lose sight of his Empire, its organisation and administration. The problems of the Imperial Government were growing wider and wider every day. Since 1526 A.D. the Central Government at Delhi was passing through a course of uncertainty;[1] unstability of the Sur Empire had been supplanted by a steady and settled system. The Empire was now an abode of peace and plenty. The reputation of a well-settled firm government reached far beyond the limits of Hindustan and the Empire attracted peoples from all climes and regions, the Shias from Persia, Uzbegs from Badakshan, Turks from Central Asia, Zoroastrains from Guzrat, Buddhists from Nepal and Kashmir, Jews from Surin and Christians from

[1] (*a*) Humayun's flight, 1540.
(*b*) Sher Shah, 1540-45.
(*c*) Jalal Khan (Islam Shah), 1545-54.
(*d*) Firoz Khan, 1554.
(*e*) Mubariz Khan (Adil Shah), 1554-55.
(*f*) Ibrahim Shah, 1555.
(*g*) Sikandar Shah, 1555.
(*h*) Humayun, 1555-56.
(*i*) Akbar (Bairam), 1556-60.

European countries. The gates of Hindustan were open to all; and the benevolent spirit of the Empire and the ungrudging patronage of Akbar served as incentives to all. Akbar himself took over the task of organising the army, and in this he was ably assisted by his Rajput generals. He placed the provincial administration under Raja Man Singh, the administration of revenue under Raja Todar Mal, the secretariat under Abul Fazl, the Sadr and Qazi administration under Sadr-us-Sudur and Mukhdum-ul-mulk and the department of culture under Shaikh Faizi. No department of the state was left untouched and Hindustan was pulsating with a new life in all her limbs.

But the hand of Akbar was not a touchstone to turn every thing as he expected. The system of branding of horses and opening up of roll register created a good deal of opposition in the circles of feudal lords. The survey and settlements of land led to the dismissal of many Qazis and ejectments of Jagirdars.[2] The reorganisation of the judiciary ended in the dismissal of many bribe-taking Qazis.[3]

The feudo-religious-cum-political rebellion of Bengal and Behar necessitated appointment of Hindus and the promulgation of many new regulations and orders against the Mullas.[4]

[2] Ain., Blochmann, pp. 208-09.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 111-14.
[4] See *ante*, Chapter IV, p. 56.

The mismanagement in the distribution of "Sayurghal" lands and "Aymas" led to the transfer of the finance department from the hands of the Sadr-us-Sudur.[5] The introduction of the "Mansabdari" system brought a large Hindu element in the army which was now manned over 50% by the "Kaffirs."[6] The co-ordination of the different elements represented in the court ushered in a common formula of court formalities.[7]

Soon the social, economic and political regulations introduced by Akbar became the target of attacks by the orthodox sections of the state. They desired Akbar as a Musalman sovereign to pursue a pro-Muslim policy. Their angle of vision was exclusive and orthodox, and they interpreted all the regulations of the Emperor in an orthodox light. They asserted, "In Islam there is nothing purely religious and nothing purely political."[8] The Mullas interpreted the whole existence of a man, irrespective of time, place and circumstances from

[5] See *ante*, Chapter IV, p 57.

[6] Erskine, An Empire Builder in the Sixteenth Century, Introduction

[7] Ain., Blochmann, 65 (*i*)

[8] Trouble arose out of the definition of "Injunction." It may mean four things :—

(*a*) The Revelations of God -Quran.
(*b*) The Sayings of the Prophet --Hadis.
(*c*) The Legal Decisions and Juristic Precedents—Fiqh.
(*d*) The Decisions of the Assembly—Jam'at.

There are many in cipretations of the Injunctions, each claiming infallibility for itself, to the exclusion of all others.

the standpoint of the Quran To many of them, non-observance of the minutest details of the injunctions whether from the Quran, Hadis, Fiqh or Fatwa amounted to a lapse from Islam. According to the Mulla conception of the Religion, Islam is so rigid that there is no scope for compromise from any standpoint whatsoever. The Laws are so rigid that any man could be proved to be faithless if a shrewd Mulla simply likes to do so, for there are ever so many points in a man's life.[9] So far Akbar was concerned, curtailing of pension of the Mullas and Qazis, the liberal interpretation of the problems of Islam, withdrawal of the vested judicial rights from the hand of the theocratic side of the state offered innumerable opportunities to the Mullas for giving adverse verdict on Akbar.[10]

The charges of apostasy or irreligiousness that have been levelled against Akbar would not have come had he not attacked the Mulla interests from the secular point of the state. By way of example, we have depicted in the Appendix to this Chapter, the life, character, events and motives of Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni, a great Mulla of the age and one of the bitterest critics of Akbar, which will illustrate our reflections on the Mulla point of view of criticism.

[9] A man ceased to be an orthodox Muslim if he wears a *pajama* below his ankle, according to some orthodox school.

[10] See *ante* Chapter IV, pp. 73 80.

Let us now give a list of the regulations that were promulgated by Akbar chronologically,[11] so that it may be easily followed by the readers.

1575-76 A.D.—(1) Mu'tah marriage was allowed.
(2) Chronogram of the seal was inscribed "*Allah-o-Akbar*" nstead of usual "*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim.*"
(3) Order was issued to write a Commentary on the Quran.
(4) The *Atharva Veda* was taken up for translation.

1576-77 A.D.—(1) Pilgrim department was opened with a Superintendent of Pilgrims (Mir-i-Haj).

1577-78 A.D.—(1) Royal hunt was stopped.
(2) *Khutba* was read in Akbar's name.

1578-79 A.D.—(1) Tajuddin introduced *Sijdah* at court.
(2) Coming of the Christians to court and Abul Fazl undertook to translate the Bible with the headline,—

[11] The Hijri dates have been synchronised with Christian dates by Prof. Brendry.

"*Aye name weye Gesu Christu*"

instead of "Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim."

(3) "*Madad-o-ma'ash*" was to be scrutinised and the boundary of the "*Aymas*" was to be fixed.

(4) The "*Mahzar*" or the so-called Infallibility Decree was presented.

1579-80 A.D.—(1) Shaving of beard was permitted by a *Fatwa* of Haji Ibrahim.

(2) Hakim-ul-mulk was sent to Mecca with Rs. 50,000 for the Sharifs.

1580-81 A.D.—(1) The oath of allegiance was demanded and the so-called *four degrees* were defined.

(2) The *Nauruz-i-Jalali* was celebrated with great eclat.

1581-82 A.D.—(1) The rebellious Shaikhs and Mullas were transported to Qandahar where they were exchanged for colts.

1582-83 A.D.—(1) *Din-i-Ilahi* was promulgated.

(2) *Tarikh-i-Alfi* was begun.

(3) Wine selling was restricted.

(4) Prostitutes were segregated.

(5) Boars and dogs were reared up and meat of boar and tiger allowed.

(6) Silk dress and gold were allowed to be worn.

(7) Marriage was regulated.

(8) *Sradh* after death was discouraged.

(9) *Azan, Prayers, Fast, Pilgrimages* were regulated and 'spurious Qurans' were destroyed in the centres of rebellion.

(10) Reading of Arabic was discouraged amongst the mass and curricula of education changed.

(11) Names of Ahmad, Muhammad and Mustafa were stopped.

(12) "The Assembly of Forty" (*Chihil Tanan*) was established.

1583-84 A.D.—(1) Animal slaughter was regulated.

(2) Mosques were changed into stables in centres of rebellion.

(3) Poor houses were started with separate establishments.

(4) Dice play and interest taking were allowed.

1584-85 A.D.—(1) *Ilahi Era* was introduced.

(2) New basis of computation of almanac was accepted according to the sun.

1585-86 A.D.—(1) Hindu social manners were introduced in Royal harem during the marriage of Salim.

(2) The dead were to be buried with heads towards the east.

(3) Brahmins were allowed to decide litigations of Hindus.

(4) "*Allah-o-Akbar*" was introduced as mode of greetings instead of "*Alai-kum-us-Salam.*"

1586-90 A.D.—(1) Flesh of cows and buffaloes were prohibited.

(2) *Sati* was discouraged.

(3) Circumcision was not to be done before 12 and that too was optional.

1591-92 A.D. (1) Badauni summarily referred to many regulations but no specific mention was made.

1592-93 A.D —(1) Regulations were made regarding the burial or cremation of a "*Darshaniya.*"

(2) All marriages were to be entered into register.

1593-94 A.D.—(1) Freedom of building a church was granted to Christians.

(2) Toleration was granted to all religions.

Islamic Canons of Test of Law

We shall now proceed on to test how far these regulations were anti-Islamic. What are the canons of test according to Islamic principles? There are usually four kinds of Injunctions :—

1. مذهبی Religious.
2. معاشرتی Social.
3. تمدني Cultural.
4. اخلاقی From the point of etiquette.

Of the religious groups there are different grades : (*a*) *Farz*, (فرض) incumbent such as Prayer, non-observance of which will mean lapse from Islam. (*b*) *Wajeb* (واجب), a religious duty but not incumbent, non-observance of which is sin, not amounting to a lapse from Islam, such as Korbani, sacrifice of animal on certain days. (*c*) *Sunnat-i-Mu'kkada* (سنت مو کده), "Do as Muhammad did" and asked

his followers to do. Non-observance of this kind of injunction is a sin but not as solemn as *Wajeb*, such as Tarabi in Ramzan according to a fixed process. *(d) Sunnat-i-Ghair-Mu'kkada* (سنت غیر مو کدہ), actions which were performed by the Prophet but not insisted upon by him, non-observance of which did not amount to a sin, such as *Namaz-i-Tuhajjud* prayer after 2 o'clock at night.

So far as the injunctions that relate to society, culture and etiquette are concerned, it is definitely stated in the Hadis that they are in no way binding and changes may be allowed according to time, place and circumstances. The Khalifas (Commanders of the Faithful) have proved by their life and actions that changes and departures might be allowed as might be demanded by time, place and circumstances. The treaty of Badr is an eloquent testimony to what the Prophet himself did to meet the convenience of the conquered Jews.

Even amongst the injunctions that are "*Farz*," incumbent, there are two groups : —

حلال (*i*) *Halal*—what may be done or may not be done, such as eating of flesh as sanctioned by the Shariat.

حرام (*ii*) *Haram*—what must not be done, such as idol worship, wine drinking.

The infringement of a *haram* regulation makes a man lapse from the faith but of a *halal* regulation makes a man an ordinary sinner.

Discussions

As has been pointed out, the Ibadat Khana was built in 1575, and soon after discussions followed. It was an age of Scholasticism and Renaissance. The spirit of the age was the quest of the why and wherefore of everything, not always in a spirit of protest, but most often in a spirit of enquiry. Many obsolete, naughty or innocent problems were introduced as apples of discord in the intellectual gymnasium of the Ibadat Khana. Badauni says, "Crowds of the learned men from all nations came to the court, and were honoured with private conversation. After enquiries and investigations which were their only business and occupation day and night, they would talk about the profound points of science and subtleness of revelation, the curiosities of history and wonders of nature, on subjects of which large volumes could give only an abstract summary."

Mu'tah Marriage Allowed
1575-76

Thus "marriage" was one of the first questions debated upon.[12] Fortunately or unfortunately Akbar had many wives as many as any of his predecessors had, much more than the orthodox number; but as a pious Sunni he could not have more than four at a time. The traditions on the point

[12] Badauni, II, Lowe, Ed 1884, p 263.

were so many and so divergent. Akbar was permitted to marry beyond the prescribed number according to the Fatwa of the Chief Qazi of the State. And there were precedents for the same. One of the Mujtahids Abu bin Laila had as many as nine wives from too liberal an interpretation of the Quranic verse, " marry whatever woman you like, two and two, and three and three, and four and four." [13] Badauni related many interesting details concerning the discussion on this problem in the Ibadat Khana. Imam Malik decreed, " by Mu'tah (not by Nikah) a man might marry any number of wives he pleased." One night Akbar invited Qazi Yakub, Abul Fazl, Ibrahim and Badauni to a discussion near Anuptalao where Badauni gave his opinion as follows :—

" The conclusion which must be drawn from so many contradictory traditions and sectarian customs is in a word this : Imam Malik and the Shias are unanimous in looking upon Mu'tah marriage as legal ; Imam Shafii and the great Imam (Abu Hanifa) look upon Mu'tah marriage as illegal. But should at any time a Quazi of the Maliki sect decide that a Mu'tah marrige is legal, it is legal according to the common belief even for the Shafiis and Hanafis."

This view of Badauni pleased Akbar very much. But Qazi Yakub was much annoyed with this decision and openly expressed his dissent.

[13] Badauni, II, p. 213.

The Emperor thereupon dismissed Yakub and appointed Qazi Hosain in his place who immediately decided that Mu'tah marriages were legal. This led to the dismissal of many Qazis and discomfiture of the Sadr and Mukhdum. "From this day forward the road of opposition and difference in opinion lay open," says Badauni.[14] Thus the dissensions grew after Badauni's decision and Akbar was not responsible for the decree on marriage.

Allah-o-Akbar in the Seals and Dies of his Court

1575-76 A.D.

In place of usual "Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim" Akbar wanted to substitute a "simpler, shorter phrase of sweeter sound—Allah-o-Akbar." Before he decided it finally, he enquired how the people would like it. Many liked the substitute but Haji Ibrahim suggested that the phrase "Allah-o-Akbar" had an ambiguous meaning as it might mean Allah is great or Allah is Akbar.[15] Haji Ibrahim suggested "*Ala Zikrullahae Akbaru*."[16] Akbar was very much displeased

[14] Badauni, II, p. 213.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 213.

[16] Literally it means, "To remember God is the greatest thing." The title of *Zill-ullah* or Shadow of God was already assumed by Sultans like Iltutmish, Balban, Firoz, Shershah. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi by Ziauddin Barni, pp. 70-75 and Tabqat, p. 230.

that his words had been so distorted and he only told, " no man who felt his weakness would claim Divinity." This showed the angularity of Haji Ibrahim and spirit of humility that ran through Akbar.

Commentary on the Quran

1575-76 A.D.

Qazi Jalaluddin was asked to write a commentary on the Quran along with other Mullas. Badauni says that this led to great dissensions amongst them and sharply divided the theocratic party into two groups. Thus unconsciously Badauni gave Akbar a compliment. The marriage debate had exposed the diversity of interpretations of the sacred texts and variety of texts themselves. Indeed Akbar was justified in his desire to have an authorised commentary, all the more so when he found that the commentary led to " great dissensions." If Mullas differed so much amongst themselves, certainly Akbar would incur the wrath of one or the other party of the Mullas according as he would accept or reject their interpretations and comments. Later on we shall find that it is these interpreters who by their conduct were more responsible for " leading Akbar a way from the path " if he had done so.

Translation of Sacred Hindu Books

1575-76 A.D.

The Atharva Veda was given for translation to Bhawan, a Deccani Brahmin; Shaikh Faizi, Badauni and Haji Ibrahim also took part in it. Besides the funny comments made by Badauni on the Atharva Veda, he took Akbar to task for translating Hindu Books. Badauni in his fanaticism refused to observe that long before him, the Hindu religious books and philosophy and no less Greek had been filtered into Islam through translation. Harun-al-Rashid, and Shah Mansur were famous translators; a peep into Sultan Mahmud's or Alberuni's archives, [17] even of orthodox Firoz Tughluq's would convince us that Badauni in opposition was only out-Islamising Islam and that too not in a spirit worthy of his knowledge.

Pilgrim Department Opened

1576-77 A.D.

Sincerity and devotedness of Akbar's soul during this period is very well illustrated by organisation

[17] Names of Sanskrit books translated by Alberuni may be found in Sushan's Introduction, E. & D., Vol. VI, Appendix to last chapter. See my article, published in 'Bulbul,' Calcutta, in 1936, July and "Arab aur Hindusthan Ke Taloqat" by Yusuf Suleiman Nadvi, Allahabad.

of the pilgrim department at the expense of the state which has already been referred to in chapter III. [18] Haj (pilgrimage) is an incumbent duty for a Muslim of means and no Indian Muslim sovereign not even Aurangzeb, undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca. To the credit of Akbar it must be said that, if politics prevented him from undertaking a journey, he gave all facility for the same to all of his subjects. The pilgrim department of Akbar will ever remain a glorious chapter in the life and achievement of the greatest of the Muslim Kings of Hindustan. He had his own fleet for pilgrimage named " Jahaj-i-Ilahi " which contained one hundred ships.[19]

Kamargah Hunt
1577-78 A.D.

While on his usual royal hunt, he had a trance and he immediately stopped royal hunt. This is the beginning of his prohibition of animal slaughter. Akbar has been much condemned for stopping animal slaughter and this has been ascribed to the Buddhist and Jain influence. But chronology tells us that the background of these humanitarian regulations may be found in the innate contemplative humanitarian instinct of Akbar, not traced to the Jains and Buddhists who came after 1880. Trances were not new to his

[18] See *ante*, Chapter III, pp. 63-64.

[19] Badauni, II, pp. 260-61.

experience. Late in life, the Emperor is said to have cried out in agony of soul, " Oh, had I the body as big as that of an elephant so that all world might feed on it!" There was no question of Jain and Buddhist influence in the stopping of animal slaughter, it came as a matter of course.

Khutba Read in the Name of Akbar

1577-78 A.D.

As has been pointed out in the Appendix to Chapter IV on the so-called Infallibility Decree, the recital of the Khutba had a deeper significance than an ordinary recital of the same. [20]

Sijdah

1578-79 A.D.

In this year, as Badauni says, Shaikh Tajuddin [21] introduced Sijdah (Prostration) and called it *Zaminbos* (kissing the ground). " Looking on the reverence due to a King as an absolute religious command, he called the face of the king as Ka'ba-i-Muradat (Sanctum of desires) and Qibla-i-Hajat (Goal of necessities)." Akbar

[20] See *ante*, Chapter V, p. 94; J.R.A S., 1924, p. 594. Khutba was read in personal names by almost all the Sultans of India including Firoz Shah, even by some provincial governors. Lane-poole, Coins of Bi. Museum, pp. 73-75.

[21] Badauni, II, pp. 266-67.

has been much maligned for this Sijdah. V. A. Smith says that Akbar almost claimed divinity by demanding Sijdah which was due to God only. Blochmann suggests that "starting from divine right theory of kingship, Akbar almost claimed divinity in the end." Mulla Sheri wrote a satire,

"The king this year has laid claim
To be a prophet.
After the lapse of a year, please God,
He will become God."

Now the question is, whether Sijdah is claimed by God only and is due to Him, or precedents showed that it was sometimes offered to men too. The next point is, whether Akbar introduced it as a religious command or as a court custom, as he did introduce many other customs.

Really in the orthodox sense, Sijdah could be claimed by God only and is due to God alone and to none else. But in some sacred books there are references against this view. "Sijdah is due to God and to one who has been made complete" and "into whom has been breathed My (God's) inspiration." As such, angels were asked to make obeisance to Adam. They did obeisance but Iblis did not.[22] In this sense as Shaikh Tajuddin held, "if obeisance is due to one who is complete,

[22] Quran, edited by Muhammad Ali, Note on Sijdah.

certainly the King who is the Insan-i-Kamil or the most perfect man, is a fit subject for Sijdah" and it is called Sijdah-i-Tazim.

Possibly in this light Shaikh Taijuddin brought forward some apocryphal traditions and practices of some of the disciples of Shaikhs of India.[23] Yakub of Kashmir, one of the greatest of the authorities on religious matters also supported the view without entering into the logical discussions. Apart from the questions, whether Akbar as the shadow of God or as the most perfect man was entitled to Sijdah or not, let us accept the orthodox view that Sijdah is offered only to God and to none else. Now the question is, whether Sijdah introduced by Akbar was a religious command or a simple court custom.

Abul Fazl in his Ain. No. 74[24] described Sijdah in connection with "*Taslim*." After narrating the custom of *Kurnish*, Taslim and a new mode of court etiquette that was introduced by Humayun, Abul Fazl passed over to Sijdah. This shows that it was a part of the court customs, and it had very little connection with religion, if any at all. Abul Fazl said that some people objected to this form of obeisance and "His Majesty ordered it to be discontinued by the ignorant and remitted it to all ranks, forbidding even his private attendants from

[23] In Islam Kings also are called "Zil-l-ullah," shadow of God.

[24] Ain., Blochmann, pp. 158-59.

using it in the Darbar-i-Am.[25] It was only allowed for "the eclect to do so." And he called it "Zaminbos" (kissing the ground).

Now to Sijdah as a family custom : Kissing the ground was a ceremony in the maternal side of Akbar ; when Kayuk Khan was chosen as the Khaqan "the members of the assembly prostrated themselves nine times, and the vast multitude outside at the same time beat their foreheads to the ground; Kayuk and followers then went and did obeisance three times to the sun."[26] At the time of Akbar, another new custom of dinner table was introduced when Akbar's Central Asian cousin Mirza Suleiman came from Badakshan to Hindustan.[27] "Horsetail" and "Kettledrum" as military honours were already in vogue and were given to Beharimal; they were Central Asian honours.

Moreover if Zaminbos was so obnoxious and anti-Islamic, why should Badauni submit to that formality? Even as early as 1577 and as late as 1593, Badauni offered Zaminbos.[28] The text of

25 Zamibos was introduced in India by Balban and it was continued till the time of Firoz Tughluq. Similarly '*Pabos*' was a common court custom during the Sultanate period. Islam Shah Sur would not be satisfied till he had received homage to his shoes by the noblemen of his court. Tripathi, Some Aspects of Muslim Administration, p. 61.

26 Howorth, *op. cit.* I, p. 163.

27 Badauni, II, p. 220.

28 J.R.A.S., 1869, article by Blochmann. Sayids were also exempted from Sijdah.

the treaty with Ranthambhor in 1569 showed that the proud Rajput House [29] should not be commanded to make the prostration (Sijdah) on entering the Royal presence.[30] And this treaty was drawn up 12 years before the so-called apostasy of Akbar. This treaty definitely proves that Sijdah did exist in some form or other long before the promulgation of the Din-i-Ilahi.

Translation of the Bible Undertaken
1578-79 A.D.

Abul Fazl was entrusted with the translation of the Bible. Orthodox objection to this translation was based on three grounds :—

(*i*) Why should he go in for the translation of the Bible, a Christian Scripture?

(*ii*) The translation was made because he believed in the doctrines of Christianity and did it in order to propagate that faith.

(*iii*) The translation of the Bible began with "*Ai Name Wey Jesu Christu*" instead of usual "*Bismillah-ir Rahman-ir Rahim.*"

Badauni being a student of history should not have taken exception to the translation of the Bible, for translations of sacred books of other religions were common in Central Asian and Arabic houses. In our chapter on Central Asian Background, we have shown that a love of culture had pervaded the

[29] Smith, Akbar, p. 99.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

family of Chengiz and Timur and it was almost instinctive in those families. Discussion on religions, acquaintance with other nation's Revelations and attempts of Kublei Khan to find a common synthetic formula would always shine as glorious examples of inquisitive Central Asian minds.

Now the Semitic Arabs excepted, Khalifas like Omar, Mansur, Harun-al-Rashid, have their contributions to make. Sultan Mahmud, Mansur, Falaki, Alberuni (the scholar), Khalid Khani and Zainul Abdin, a court writer of Firoz, are famous for their collections and translations from Scriptures of other nations. So, by tradition Akbar made no departure from Islamic Canons when he ordered the translation of the Bible.

Then Badauni wanted his readers to understand that " His Majesty firmly believed in the truth of Christianity and wishing to spread the doctrine of Jesus, ordered prince Murad to take a few lessons in Christianity under good auspices and charged Abul Fazl to translate the Gospel." Now the Christians arrived on the 28th of February, in 1578, and Akbar ordered the translations of the Bible in March. Was he so completely influenced by the Jesuit Fathers that within less than four weeks of their arrival he believed in their doctrines and wishing to propagate them, had the Bible translated? It looks rather strange for a man like Akbar ; at least subsequent readings of Akbar's life do not support it.

Badauni's great proof of Akbar's apostasy is that Akbar asked Abul Fazl to begin the translation with "*Ai Name Wey Jesu Christu*" and omit "*Bismillah-ir Rahman-ir Rahim*"; Faizi further completed that couplet adding "*Subhanaka la Siwaka Ya hu.*" [31]

Badauni intended his readers to believe that the change anticipated the anti-Islam and proved the pro-Christian in Akbar. But far from it. A Christian title was given to the Christian Book in order to create a Christian atmosphere as he did attend the discussions of the Hindu Yogis with Hindu marks on his forehead, or of the Zoroastrian Mobeds with fire lit up, or of the Jesuits with Portuguese costumes on. If he had done it only with the Christians there might have been some reason for thinking in the way of Badauni. But he did it with every faith he came in contact with to create local atmosphere. Thus when the Bhagabat Gita was translated, the head line used was "Om Sachchidanand." [32]

The tendency of Akbar even after the translation, says Badauni, was that especially on Friday nights "he would sit up there the whole night continually occupied in discussing questions of

31 Mir Taqi Similar passages were the common fashion amongst free thinkers.

32 Rahim began his Madanastak with Sri Ganesh; Ahmad began his Samudrika Ganesh; and Ahmadulla invoked Sri Ram, Swaraswati and Ganesh in his Nayika Bhed.

religion whether fundamental or collateral." [33] Soon after this Badauni tells us, "Akbar distributed a charity of five lacs of rupees to the Sharifs of Mecca through Hakim-ul-mulk." The tendency of the mind of Akbar as characterised during this period definitely proves that Akbar could not have been actuated by so deep a belief in Christianity as to order the translation of the Bible. Badauni's statement is self-contradictory.

1578-79 A.D.

During this year Madad-o-ma'ash were reorganised and "Mahzar" was issued.[34]

The significance of these actions has already been elaborately discussed in Chapter IV and they were more political than religious if at all.

Shaving of Beard Permitted

1579-80 A.D.

Shaving of beard was permitted by a Fatwa of Haji Ibrahim.

This was a social custom, the infringement of which did not amount to a lapse from Islam. Regarding the shaving of beard there was a discussion and there were some apocryphal traditions in its favour as advanced by Haji Ibrahim. No doubt the orthodox section did not approve of shaving of beard.

33 Badauni, II, p. 262.

34 Leicester University Lecture, Buckler History Section, 1924.

But if the shaving of beard meant a lapse from Islam, we think more than half of the Muslim world has lapsed from faith.

The Oath of Allegiance and "Four Degrees"

1580-81 A.D.

The promulgation of the Mahzar and the recitation of the Khutba had great political significance. Akbar was conscious that a flutter had been created in many circles. He intended to guard against all contingencies. In Islam, it was a time of great political murders and mishaps. Shah Tahmasp had been murdered in Persia ; Vizier Sokoli in Rum was assassinated ; the Ismailia assassins had created a terror in the minds of men. Already a rebellion had broken out in Bengal, Behar and in the Punjab ; and his own officer Shah Mansur was found to have been implicated in it. Akbar did not know where to place his confidence, and where and when not. So he wanted a formal declaration of allegiance by means of Oath of Fealty. It was a sort of Test Act. The test was the readiness to sacrifice Property, Life, Honour and Religion—indeed the best treasures in a man's life. To begin with, this oath of allegiance[35] had nothing to do with his religion —it was purely a state affair. Smith cunningly proclaimed that they were the famous four degrees

[35] Oath of Allegiance was common in the Abbasid period of Khelafat History.

of his Din-i-Ilahi. But he did not mention the dates of the two events ; four degrees were defined on the 25th of February, 1581, and the Din-i-Ilahi was promulgated in 1582 (February). So this difference in time, the oath preceding the religion is very significant. Smith[36] has quoted from Badauni and incidentally he has referred to a letter from Mirza Jani of Thatta. We have already pointed out that Badauni wrote his Muntakhabut Tawarikh in 1592-93 and as such it was easy for him to connect the two. May be that in the form of initiation the formal declaration contained four similar points, but it does not necessarily follow that they were meant for all and sundry, as Badauni himself admitted in the next line that the courtiers only used to recite the Declaration.

In this year, the *Ilahias* were arrested for their alleged apostasy from Islam and punished. This proves beyond doubt that heresy against Islam was not tolerated by Akbar.

Nauruz-i-Jalali Celebrated

1580-81 A.D.

This Persian festival was celebrated with great festivity and ceremonies in this year. Probably this was to allay the Persian Shia discontent which might have developed in Persia owing to assumption of his Khelafat title some time back. The Persians

[36] Smith, Akbar, p. 215.

were at the back of the rebellion of Mirza Hakim. So gorgeous Persian ceremonies were celebrated in order to soothe the feeling of discontent that might exist amongst them.

Expulsion of the Mullas

1581-82 A.D.

The insinuation of Badauni and of Smith was that behind the expulsion of the guardians of Islam, the Mullas, the anti-Islamic feeling of Akbar had its full play. But, as has been pointed out in Chapter IV,[37] it was the rebellious Mullas who had made his throne tremble, and it was they who were expelled. A rebel was a rebel whether a believer or nonbeliever; the sting of an arrow of a believer is not sweeter than that of a non-believer. Fortunate were these Mullas that they were not trampled under foot of elephants and that Akbar was not Alauddin.

1582-83 A.D.

This year was really a vital one in Akbar's life. Badauni mentioned about a dozen and a half regulations in this year by which he tried to prove that the promulgation of the Din-i-Ilahi was accompanied by many other socio-religious changes partly as adjuncts to the new creed and partly as measures against Islam.

[37] See *ante*, Chapter, IV, pp. 111-114.

Though they have all been placed in the same year, really they were not of the same year; without a diary at hand and writing history long after, Badauni placed all of those regulations together, in order to give more force to his conclusions regarding Akbar's deviation from Islam. We shall take up some important regulations of this year, and shall try to show that inspite of them, Akbar was not an apostate even if these regulations had really been promulgated by him.

"The Era of One Thousand"—Alfi Era of Thousand Years introduced

1582-83 A.D.

If this change was introduced with a desire of slighting Islam, why was not the monogram on coin made compulsory? In his coins, we find both new and old monograms; we have instances of Islamic monarchs using non-Hijri eras in some places. Even Muhammad used Rumi era himself; Hijri was inaugurated by Khalifa Omar and the Hijri era was not a religious injunction. It had no connection with his commandments. Another reason for starting the new era was his attempt to introduce more astronomically scientific era instead of the current lunar Hijri era which is astronomically defective. This attempt of Akbar to change the mode of computation had precedents in Omar Khayyam, the great astronomer-poet of

Persia who tried to bring some changes in Hijri era owing to the fundamental defects of lunar calculation. Alberuni, the great scholar of Ghazni, drew attention to this defect of lunar calculation.[38] The mode of computation in Hindu almanac was also changed in 990 A.H. That clearly proves the angle from which Akbar brought in the changes in the defective system of both Hindu and Muslim Eras.

Tarikh-i-Alfi

1582-83 A.D.

The history of 1,000 years was to be written. Akbar ordered that the date should be calculated from the death of the Prophet and not from the "flight," as was accepted by the orthodox. As Badauni says that Akbar's ground for making the change was that the "flight" was derogatory to him, so the date should commence with his demise. Right or wrong, it is a matter of opinion. But there was much boldness in his conception and more in the execution.

Wine Selling Regulated

1582-83 A.D.

Use of wine was allowed officially by Akbar, a Muslim King. Badauni's great objection was that Akbar being a Muslim sovereign should not have formally allowed wine in the face of the strictest

[38] Encyclopædia of Religion, see art. Omar Khayyam.

injunction to the contrary. Badauni, inspite of his great knowledge of history, forgot that in the Turko-Mughal families, wine was almost a family trait and blood-element. Timur, the Turk, was a confirmed drunkard and "the woman in Timur's harem drank."[39] Abu Mirza had almost a wine-jar in his stomach and he could drink for 21 days at a stretch. Babar was notorious for his drinking bouts. Even Akbar in his early career, as Jahangir narrated,[40] "raised drinking ceremony almost to an art." The grandees of the court only vied with each other in getting near to their ideal, the Sultan and each was a miniature edition of his master. In Gibbon's phraseology, "the wine of Shiraz had always prevailed over the laws of the Prophet." Attempts were made by some monarchs from time to time to regulate or prohibit wine but to no purpose. Balban inspite of his inhuman efforts could not abolish it; Alauddin inspite of his barbarous ordinances failed to check it So Akbar like a wise man without attempting the "Impossible Better" tried the "Possible Good." Instead of making the whole of India dry, he would allow wine on medical grounds, and made elaborate arrangements for restricting and controlling its sale and laid down severe punishments for excessive drinking, carousals and

39 Davy's Institutes. One Christian Priest, Sanjan, was present at such a function.

40 Smith, Akbar, p. 114.

disorderly conduct.[41] Thus his attempt was to bring drinking within limits; of course his measures were not completely successful and Mughal India remained as "wet" as America is to-day inspite of her best attempts to make her "dry."

Prostitutes Segregated

1582-83 A.D.

Regulation of wine was followed by regulation of prostitutes. The prosperity and population of the capital was a great attraction to those "devil's agents." In order to keep the city atmosphere uncontaminated, he segregated them in one corner of the city and built for them what is known as Shaitanpura or the devil's quarters. Dancing girls might be taken home under certain conditions but no prostitutes. There was a register in which names of all prostitute-hunters were to be entered. Thus was effected a great check on the new entrants at least; for this legislation Akbar's fault was indeed that he was "cursed with reason."

Dogs and Boars Reared up

1582-83 A.D.

Badauni was almost wild with rage when he narrated the story of dogs and boars, the most

41 Harun-al-Rashid used to take wine on medical advice (Arabian Nights). Bu Ali Senai, the great Arabic scholar, in his famous "Qanun" (treatise on medicine), praised wine for medical reasons

unclean things for a believer.[42] Animals were kept in the Zoo for hunting purposes; there were other kinds of animals too. Badauni mentioned only the dogs and boars, for their presence meant defilement in Islam. There were camels, bears, *chitas* (leopards), elephants, dogs, boars, buffaloes, mules and many varieties of birds, as Abul Fazl informed us. There could be no objection to a king's maintaining a Zoo. Hunting was a passion in the Timurid family. Akbar had caressed dogs when a child at his father's place.[43] Hunting dogs were always kept in the family.

" Timur had his falcon, his dogs as his companions " in his hunting excursions. Dog racing was a fashion in the 16th century India,[44] and as such there were dogs kept and maintained by the grandees of the age In Fiqh there is a discussion whether a game hunted by a dog could be taken or not and the decision was that it could be taken. In that case dog was not always unclean. In Arabia dogs were tamed for hunting and for protection of householders.

Regarding boars, Badauni told that the Hindus " persuaded him that boar was one of the ten forms, which the divinity assumed in coming down." [45] So Badauni's sly suggestion was that by allowing

42 Badauni, II, p 314-15.

43 Akbarnama, I, Beveridge, p. 589.
Badauni, II, p 69.
Badauni, II, p. 314.

boars, love of Hindus was expressed. But so far as Akbar's belief in incarnation was concerned, the discussions of the Ibadat Khana were explicit that he did not believe in incarnation and laughed at the idea of " the All Perfect assuming the form of an animal (a fish or a boar)."[46] The speech of the Philosopher, therefore, contradicts what Badauni wanted his readers to believe. The rearing up of a dog or keeping boar in a royal zoological garden had no connection with his Din-i-Ilahi.

Flesh of Wild Boar and of Tiger Allowed

1582-83 A.D.

Indeed this kind of meat was allowed not for the Muslims but for the Hindus. Hindus were permitted to take those kinds of meat. In the Ramayana, flesh of hunted wild boar was one of the dainties. Tiger meat was allowed in Central Asia.[47] If Badauni had mentioned the occasion when the regulation was introduced and also the names of those for whom they were meant, the complication would have been removed. During the Chitor expedition (1568-69), the army included heterogeneous elements and principally there were Rajputs and Turks; amongst the former, boar meat was sanctioned and among the latter tiger meat was

46 Dabistan, II, p. 91.

47 Firdousi, Shahnama; Badauni, II, p. 317 (Original).

sanctioned and not for Muslims in general. This permission was given long before his alleged apostasy; so it had no connection with the Din-i-Ilahi. Badauni in order to give more force to his apostasy, placed the event in the year of the Din-i-Ilahi.

Use of Silk and Gold was Allowed

1582-83 A.D.

There are decisions against the use of silk and gold no doubt. But the Prophet himself once wore silk which came from the Roman Empire. It was a military necessity at the time of Khalifa Omar that soldiers were asked to give up silk owing to the very nature of the stuff it contained, for at that time they were generally at war. The followers were denied the ordinary luxuries of body and in the time of Omar the people were debarred from using silk. But as soon as the Muslims had strongly entrenched themselves in their position, Khalifas like Mu'awiya, Rashid and others began to enjoy luxuries of body and used to wear silk. Sher Shah presented to Shaikh Byram a fine piece of Bengal silk.[48]

The Sadr of Akbar's court used to wear silk and permitted the use of silk where it was produced in large quantities. Islamic people changed their dress almost in every country they domiciled them-

[48] Pringle Kennedy, *op. cit.*, I, p. 209.

selves in. Babar himself introduced the Kazal-bash (red cap), a Persian custom, amongst his troops.[49] The use of a *chapkan* down to the ankle is not an Arabian custom but was introduced from Persia and Turkey long after Muhammad's death. These are of course occasional commandments falling within "M'ashrati" group and lapse is no defection from Faith.

Marriage Regulated

1582-83 A.D.

In Islam, of course marriage has no restriction in age except puberty. Any one that can produce a child is permitted to marry and any woman who can bear a child is a fit subject for that contract.[50] But at the instance of Prince Salim,[51] Akbar promulgated this regulation in 1582; it is improbable for Salim to promulgate this regulation as he was at that time only 13 years of age, unmarried and was not mature enough to understand the far-reaching implications of marriage laws. This regulation was put in 1582 like many others in order to prove "lapse of Akbar." However, the law was that no boy below 16 and no girl below 14 should marry and that a cousin or a near relation should not be married because in that case the

49 Erskine *op. cit.*, p. 244.

50 Muhammadan Law by D. F. Mulla.

51 Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 503.

sexual appetite was small.[52] Really, what the social reformers have found and decided in the twentieth century, the great anticipator did four hundred years earlier and he is a criminal because he was 'cursed with reason'.

Feast at Death Discouraged and that at Birth Encouraged

1582-83 A.D.

Badauni must criticise because he was out to do so even if Akbar had done something in accordance with the Law.

Here is an instance to the point. The death feast for Muslims in India was an Indian custom and has no connection with Islam where it was unlawful.[53] "There can be no sense," said Akbar, in offering food which is material to the spirit of the dead person, since he could not certainly experience any benefit from it; much better, therefore, would it be, on the day of any one's birth to make that a high feast day." And Hadis enjoins that "at birth-feast one goat to be sacrificed for daughter and two for a son." Anniversary feasts were always observed in Central Asian families. That is a custom indeed. Prophet's birth is always celebrated in "Milad-un Nabi."

[52] Badauni, II, p. 315.

[53] Herklot Qanun-i-Islam, p. 424.

Many Muslims celebrate their own birth days in imitation of that of the Prophet. It has no connection with Mazhab.

Prayers of Islam, Azan and Haj Stopped

1582-83 A.D.

" Pilgrimages were henceforth forbidden," so said Baduani. But were they ? Again Badauni said, " Friday prayers were not stopped." Baduani's statement is, therefore, self-contradictory.[54] Once more he said that the new Sadr Sayid Mir Fathulla of Shiraz, who was appointed in 1582, used to offer Shia prayers in public. Soon after Badauni mentioned of Shaikh Arif Hosain, the Mu'azzin (criers for prayers), calling for prayers at the house of Abul Fazl near the portico five times a day.[55] Akbar himself offered prayers after the death of Abul Fazl long after the Din was promulgated. Akbar said prayers personally on his grave.[56] Badauni would have been true had he said that prayers and Azan were stopped in the unauthorised mosques, built during and after rebellions in Bengal and Behar and instances can be found in the life of the Prophet when he ordered the demolition of unauthorised mosques as he did at Medina.

[54] Badauni, II, p. 316.

[55] Darbar-i Akbari, Hosain Azad

[56] Tabqat-i-Akbari, E & D, Vol. V, p. 181, foot note 1.

So far as stopping of the pilgrimage was concerned, it is a distortion of facts. After the discovery of the embezzlement of the pilgrim grant by Mir-i-Haj, Akbar stopped grants to pilgrims for some time. We know it from Du Jarric that the Third Mission (1594) while proceeding to Lahore, saw a large number of people going to Mecca on pilgrimage from the port of Guzrat. Even the ladies of the royal familes were found sailing towards Mecca long after the Din was promulgated. His institution of Jahaj-i-llahi will ever remain a monument of his achievements. Nizamuddin says, " Akbar appointed Mir-i-Haj, or leader of the pilgrimage to conduct a caravan from Hindustan like the caravans from Egypt and Syria to the Holy place. The design was carried out and every year a party of enlightened men of Hind received provision for their journey from the royal treasury and went under an appointed leader from the port of Guzrat to the Holy places." [57]

Arabic Reading Discouraged and Curricula Changed

1582-83 A.D.

The regulation read thus " The common people should no longer learn Arabic because such

[57] Tabqat-i-Akbari, E & D, V, p. 391.

people generally cause mischief."[58] It was prohibited for the common people, who half educated as they generally were, often half understood and more often misunderstood the intricacies of the Arabic language with its pun and play on dots. They should be easily led by the Mullas to believe or disbelieve anything to suit their convenience as has been the case during the Bengal rebellion. The Maulavis in charge of the Madrasas attached to Mosques were of the type of Abdu-n Nabi and Abdulla Sultanpuri. The demonstration given by the Mullas during the Ibadat Khana discussions of their understanding of Arabic language with their differences of interpretation was not very encouraging.[59] Akbar had seen the baneful effects of exclusive attention to theology. Being infused with a spirit of Renaissance, Akbar desired to substitute a curricula with introduction of philosophy, astronomy, medicine, mathematics, poetry, novels and other cultural subjects in the place of pure literary Arabic.

In language, he gave more attention to Persian than to Arabic and Hindi and extended royal patronage to the development of pure Persian, Persian being the common language of the scholars of poetry, of art and of literature. The fulness

[58] The Farman of 495 A. H. ran thus, "Prohibit the basest people from learning science in the cities because often insurrection arose from these people."

[59] Dabistan, II, p. 99.

of Akbar's Empire was overflowing and Akbar's age was the Augustan age of Persian literature in India. According to Abul Fazl there were over 150 poets from Persia alone not to speak of Indian poets in Persian. It was no crime if Akbar had taken a fancy for purely Persian words and phraseology to the exclusion of Arabic alphabets. Badauni found fault with Akbar that he asked his poets to exclude purely Arabic letter (ث - ح - ص - ض - ط - ظ - ع)[68] and henceforth عبدالله was written ابدالله. This play upon words and dots was a characteristic of the age. Faizi wrote a famous commentary on the Quran where no dot was used on the top and another where no dot was at the bottom.

"*Qurans*" *were Destroyed*

1582-83 A.D.

Yes, they were. But which ones ?—the unauthorised ones written and distributed by mischief-makers during the rebellions in Bengal and Behar and not all Qurans. The description of the Priests of the 1st and 2nd Missions pointed out that qurans were destroyed between 1578 and 1584. That is the period of the Bengal rebellion and just after.

This synchronism with the period of rebellion is significant. It was a measure against rebellions. Even Khalifa Osman did destroy unauthorised qurans. A copy of the Quran which

[68] Badauni, II, p. 316.

was not a version of the real recitation of the Prophet from the Message brought by Gabriel was no Quran and its destruction was no crime.

Names of Ahmad, Muhammad, Mustafa Not Allowed at Court.

1582-83 A D.

Was it compulsory ? No, Akbar's own name was Jalaluddin Muhammad. There were many courtiers of that name in his court. But this much is true that he discouraged the association of those sacred names with frail mortal beings. This is not certainly due to his hatred of the hallowed names of Islam. It was a Sufi mode not to associate frail human beings with that sacred name of the Prophet. Orthodox custom is that as soon as the name of the Prophet is uttered, it should be followed with usual "*Sallallaho.*" In ordinary conversation, the name of a man like Muhammad is uttered, certainly the customary epithet is not mentioned. Therefore, it was better that the sacred name was dropped. Even Badauni advocated a similar idea when he had to utter the name of Fatima in connection with an unchaste woman. "To call such miserable wretches by the name of our blessed Prophet's daughter would indeed be wrong," says Badauni. And still in the same breath, he would curse Akbar for doing so.[61]

[61] Badauni, II, p. 324.

" The Assembly of Forty " was Inaugurated

1583-83 A.D.

It was an intellectual assembly of the wise men and had behind it a purely Islamic tradition, known as " The Chihil Tanan " or the " The forty Abdals." After the death of Muhammad, the last of the long series of prophets, the Earth felt that she could no longer be honoured by prophets walking on her surface. God promised, so runs the story, that there should always be on earth "Forty holy men, Abdals, for whose sake He would let the Earth remain."

It was clear from the discussions in the Ibadat Khana that no absolute reliance could be placed on the authorities, for they were so many and so varied. So this body of intellectuals was inaugurated who decided questions, as Badauni tells us, " according to reason and not by tradition." In that age of Renaissance, a child of culture as Akbar was, it was in fitness of things that he should form the famous "Forty." It was the fitting culmination of the Ibadat Khana.

Alms Houses were Established with Separate Establishments

1583-84 A.D.

Badauni was so uncharitable that he could hardly brook the idea of even humanitarian regula-

tions if that humanity concerned the non-Muslims. Akbar only carried on the work of Sher Shah when he established Poor Houses for the Hindus separately in imitiation of his great predecessor Sher Shah who had started separate establishments in *Sarais*. That showed the catholic spirit of the *Emperor* and the sympathetic sentiments of that great ruler of men. But Mulla Badauni would not appreciate it, for, to him humanity meant only Muslim humanity.

Dice Play and Interest Taking

1583-84 A.D.

If dice play was for play's sake, there was no harm. But if it was on stake basis, certainly Akbar infringed an important injunction of religion. But was it within the Mazhabi group ?

Ilahi Era was Introduced

1584-85 A.D.

Indeed it was ; it was a purely political and scientific era in consonance with the spirit of the age of Scholasticism and Renaissance. It had no connection with religion. It showed his breadth of vision and length of wisdom. Prof. Brendry has exposed the myth of apostasy behind the Ilahi Era in his book on the " Ilahi Era."

Salim's Marriage and Hindu Manners

1585-86 A.D.

The festivities at the marriage of Salim were mostly Hindu. The customs and usages of mothers are generally followed during the marriage ceremonials. The elasticity of the Turko-Mongol temperament has allowed them to accept manners and customs of any country of higher culture wherever they had gone. In China the Turks accepted Chinese manners, in Russia Russian, in Arabia Arabian, and in India Indian. Sultana Rezia introduced the Royal umbrella as a monarchical paraphernalia; Sekander Lodi introduced the system of weighing in gold like the ancient Hindu kings. It was a purely social matter where no religious implication should come in.

The dead to be Buried with head towards the East

1585-86 A.D.

Akbar indeed looked upon the Sun as the life-giving force of the world and there is no doubt that he gained some miraculous powers by Yogic practices. Preference of one direction to another was due to the influence of these occult practices. Akbar himself slept with his head towards the east.

This has been interpreted by the orthodox as a mark of slight, for Akbar allowed the dead to stay in grave with their feet towards the west in which direction lay Mecca. What Akbar did had no reference to Mecca but to the east. Incidentally and unconsciously his action had a reference to Mecca, it being towards the west of India.

Brahmins Allowed to Decide Litigations amongst Hindus

1585-86 A.D.

This is just the official recognition of Sher Shah's procedure. It was no new thing in India to requisition the services of the Brahmins in judicial trials involving Hindus. Even extremely orthodox Muslim Sultans in different parts of India had done it. The angle of vision shown by Abdulla Sultanpuri during the trial of the Mathura Brahmin [62] only convinced Akbar of the necessity of such a step. Badauni felt this appointment of Hindu Pandits bitterly especially because they came after the dismissal of the Muslim Qazis.

"Allah-o-Akbar" Introduced in the Mode of Greetings instead of "As-Salam-o-Alaikum"

1585-86 A.D.

Yes, Akbar did it. Was it not a social custom of Akhlaqi group? As has been noticed before,

[62] Badauni, II, p. 128.

changes had often been made in manners and customs of Islamic peoples in different parts of world where they settled or made conversions.

It was introduced in 1585-86 and the Din-i-Ilahi in 1582-83. It had necessarily no immediate connection with the Din-i-Ilahi as it came four years after. The whole trouble came from the word "Akbar." Was it used as an adjective meaning "the great" or did it refer to "Akbar personally." But it was no crime for the son of Humayun to have the name "Akbar" for which he was not responsible. Even if it was a violation, the law fell into the Ma'sharti (social) group and not Mazhabi (religious) group.

1586-90 A.D.

These were the years of war in Sind in which Akbar was personally busy and no new regulations have been ascribed to these years.

"Sati" Discouraged

1590-91 A.D.

The burning of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands was discouraged. If Akbar was a believer in Hinduism, he should not have stopped a sacred custom of the Hindus. But he did it only to prevent a cruel custom whether Hindu or Muslim. And it had no reference to his religious belief at all.

Circumcision was to be Done not Before 12th Year and that too Optional

1590-91 A.D.

It was a Jewish custom adopted by Islam. Akbar's regulation was that it should be made optional and should be done, if at all, at an age when boys could understand what it was. Here Akbar gave every man a choice and opportunity to have a play of his reason. Indeed the child of Reason as he was, he could not deny it to others. According to the orthodox section, it was against Islam. But Akbar had been cursed for having his own reason.

The circumcision is only a social custom adopted to suit the hygienic condition of the Semitic people. This law of circumcision was not adopted by all Aryan Christians even when they were converted to Islam.

1591-92 A.D.

Badauni said that many new regulations were introduced this year but did not mention what they were.

This was the time when Badauni was under orders of suspension for overstanding leave and producing a false medical certificate from Hakim Ain-ul-Muluk of Delhi. If there was any very objectionable regulation, certainly he would have mentioned them.

"*Cremation of a Darshaniya*"

1592-93 A.D.

Dr. Smith, quoting from Badauni, says that a fantastic regulation was made for the 'disciples' (Ilahian) *chelas*.

"If any of the *Darshaniya* disciples died, whether man or woman, they should have some uncooked grains and a burnt brick round the neck of the corpse and thrown into river, and then they should take out the corpse and burn it at a place where no water was."[63]

The regulation quoted above has no meaning. Badauni left his sentence half finished; when he could not make out what he meant, he left the entire regulation untold with the remark, "I cannot mention here"; ignorance or wilful omission?

This ceremonial seems to be peculiar. To give effect to this regulation, two things are necessary :—

(1) The body must not be entombed ;
(2) There must be a river.

Now we know definitely what Akbar himself said about the last rites of Birbar. The body was also cremated in certain cases. Therefore, at least in those cases where the body was cremated, the regulation became necessarily ineffective.

[63] Smith, p. 219.

And a river was not always to be found where a *Darshaniya* might die. In such cases the regulation became ineffective.

If this regulation was actually put into practice, of course if there was any such one, Badauni should have mentioned the whole of it. So our conclusion is that the quotation was either distorted or Badauni did not understand it all.

Registration of Marriages

1592-93 A.D.

This was a corollary to a previous regulation regarding marriage. "One man, one wife" being the law, a record and registration was inevitable if it was meant to be effective. And Akbar meant business and not pious wishes alone. It was a pure administration of affairs.

Toleration Granted to All Religions

1593-94 A.D.

The root of troubles lay in his policy of universal toleration. The Mulla section of Islam claimed that Islam was the only repository of truths and hence there was no scope of compromise with other faiths. Does not the Quran bristle with examples of the highest form of toleration[64]; does not

[64] Quran, II, 259. "Cultural Fellowship" by A. Chakravarti, published by Thacker Spink, Calcutta, pp. 34-39.

the example of Muhammad typify the spirit of compromise after the battle of Badr? When he granted the Jews and Christians right to stay and worship in the Darul-Islam did not the Quran assure, " There is no compulsion in Religion " ?

If the latter converts, in order to suit their convenience changed or distorted his teachings, Islam was not responsible. Akbar in preaching universal toleration was only following the path of the Prophet in its true spirit and perspective. The forces of time, the spirit of Renaissance, the Sufi tendencies of the age, the teachings of Shah Abdul Latif, constant association with the saints of different creeds of the age and his innate nature were all responsible for that open preaching of the principle of universal toleration in the land of Hindustan erst while torn asunder by the bitter attacks of orthodoxy.

Freedom of Building Churches

1593-94 A.D.

To the Christian priests, Akbar granted the right of building churches. Was it actuated by his belief in Christianity or by his spite against Islam? Or was it a part of the Din-i-Ilahi? None of these indeed.

He did not believe in the doctrine of Christianity in its entirety. This is proved by his questions

to the clergymen in the Ibadat Khana. Christian Fathers could not satisfy him so far as the Trinity, the Sonship of God and Virginity of Mary were concerned. Earnest and long attempt of saints like Rudolf to convert Akbar all but proved futile.

There was no question of spite against Islam when Islam was pitted against Christianity. Instances are not rare when the clergymen complained "of Akbar's bias against Christianity." More than once Akbar had to warn the Christian priests of the danger of using unguarded language against the Mullas or their faith. Further Badauni and Smith said, "after the Lahore fire, Akbar had turned back to Islam." If so, how could he have been actuated in 1592-93 after he had returned to Islam, by spite against Islam to grant to the Christians the right of building churches? Therefore, neither was there any lapse from Islam, nor was there any coming in, nor any spite against Islam. So far as permission to build churches was concerned, may we ask if it was a part of the Din-i-Ilahi to build churches for Christians? certainly not, as has been pointed out previously in Chapter IV. Was not Azam Khan an Ilahian? Did he not strongly oppose this measure permitting the Christians to build their churches?

From the above discussion of the regulations of Emperor Akbar, it is clear that most of his "Ains" had Islamic background. Some of them had

precedents in the actions of Khalifas or Sultans that preceded him. Others were allowed by the Shariat; "for reasons of State" many more were necessitated by the social or economic conditions of the Empire and such changes were permissible in the Muslim dominions inhabited by non-Muslims.[65] It is therefore, not proper to brand Akbar as an apostate because he promulgated those "Ains." Of course, Badauni did brand Akbar as an apostate and there was personal bias for his doing so as has been metioned in the appendix following.

[65] Tritton, Non-Muslim Subjects in Muslim Empire, Introduction.

CHAPTER VI

APPENDIX

BADAUNI AND HIS 'MUNTAKHABU-T TAWARIKH'

Abdul Qadir, Faizi and Abul Fazl were the pupils of the famous Shaikh Mubarak in 1558, and all three were brilliant scholars. Faizi specialised in medicine and poetry, Abul Fazl in theology and history, and Badauni in grammar and logic. In 1573, Abdul Qadir was introduced to court and he accepted a Madad-i-Ma'ash.

In course of a debate against Ibrahim of Sarhind, he first attracted the attention of the Emperor who was much 'pleased to see the range of his theological learning.' And he was selected often to debate in the Ibadat Khana 'to break the pride of the learning of the Mullas.' Abdul Qadir took much interest and displayed considerable knowledge in the naughty and subtle problems of theology. But after the introduction of Abul Fazl into the court "the high opinion, which Akbar had formed of Abdul Qadir's learning and disputational powers, was transferred to Abul Fazl whose boldness of thought and breadth of opinion dazzled the court and excited the jealousy and envy of the Ulama.[1]"

[1] J. R. A. S., 1869, Blochmann's life of Badauni.

In the beginning, Akbar thought that Badauni was a Sufi but in the end he regretted to find that Badauni was only a 'sun-dried Mulla.'[2] A bit of Badauni's mind could be read in his reply to Akbar's question enquiring as to why he wanted to join the expedition against Rana Kika. Badauni proudly declared that his 'intention in joining the war was to kill the infidels.'[3] The first literary production of Badauni was Kitab-ul Ahadis dealing, among other things, 'with the excellence of expedition against the infidels.'[4] Badauni was entrusted with translation of the Mahabharat along with some other scholars and for this he cursed his lot that he had to write the names of gods of the infidels[5] Badauni's mother died in 1589; he took leave and went home with a MS. copy of the Khirad Afza, a very favourite book of Akbar. He overstayed leave by one year and moreover lost the copy of Khirad Afza and dared not appear before the Sovereign.

At last on the recommendation of Faizi, Badauni was allowed to appear before His Majesty at Lahore and was restored to favour (1591-92).

In 1593, Abul Fazl helped Badauni to attract favour of Akbar on the day of Nau Ruz and was recommended for the post of a Mutwali[6] of the

[2] Ain, Blochmann, p. 104, N. 2.
[3] Badauni, II, pp. 233-234.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 234.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 329, Blochmann, p. 104 N.
[6] Mutwali means keeper of a shrine or holy place.

tomb of Ma'in-ud-din at Ajmer. But Akbar liked him to stay at court for his literary gifts and entrusted him with the task of translation of Bahr-ul Asmar. In 1593-94, Badauni completed the third part of the Tarikh-i-Alfi. In 1595, Faizi died and Badauni was much relieved to hear that his rival at court, in religion, nay in life, had left the world. Mulla Badauni expressed his devilish venom [7]; for, if he could not beat Faizi in life, he must do so at his death. Akbar liked Badauni in spite of his lurid taste and bitter orthodoxy for his literary merits. Till the end of his life (1595 ?) Badauni continued in the court of Akbar.

Badauni's Angle of Vision

From a brief sketch of the life of Badauni at the court of Akbar, we have seen him as a holder of Madad-i-Ma'ash of 1,000 bighas of land, as Imam of Wednesday prayer, as a soldier against Rana Kika, as translator of books, whereas his rival in school had risen to be the poet laureate of the Empire, his junior comrade was the highest dignitary of the state; naturally he lost the balance of his mind. On more than one occasion, he deplored his lot and envied that of Abul Fazl and Faizi.[8]

[7] Badauni, II, p. 420; III, pp. 414-5, "A dog has gone from the world in an abominable state. He was a miserable hellish dog."

[8] Badauni, II, p. 271.

In his childhood Badauni had been trained on the lines of an orthodox Mulla. His maternal grand-father Muluk Shah taught him grammar, recitation of the Quran and Islamic law. Once Badauni set out to pay a visit to Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, a highly revered Mulla of the age. As soon as Badauni saw that the pious Shaikh ' rose up to do honour to Hindus ' he felt obliged to forego the pleasure. Badauni ' styled Sufism as nonsense ' [9] in connection with Sharif Aml. Badauni could not tolerate anything that was non-Sunni; when a Shia was wrongly murdered by a Sunni, Badauni had not a word of sympathy for the dead Shia whom he immediately consigned to hell for no other reason but that he was a Shia. There are innumerable instances when Badauni concocted facts or distorted them to suit his conclusion or spoke only half truth. As for example, Badauni interdicts Akbar for having given permission for the use of boar meat against laws of the Shariat. But he never mentioned whether the permission was given to Muslims or to anybody else and what was the occasion for it. The permission was indeed given to the Rajput soldiers amongst whom boar meat was permissible and the occasion was the Chitor expedition where both Hindu and Muslim soldiers fought in the same ranks. Moreover, the permission was

9 J.R.A S. 1869, Blochmann's life of Badauni.

given not only for 'boar meat' but also for tiger's meat which was permissible among Turks. As regards the regulation forbidding cow's flesh, Badauni said that Akbar had stopped killing of cows in order to show his love for Hindu wives, and that he was actuated by an anti-Islamic feeling. But the entire regulation taken as a whole reads otherwise,—" Nor flesh of cows, buffaloes, sheep and camels be taken, for they are domestic animals." But honest Badauni only mentioned cows, for the mention of the buffaloes, sheep and camels would defeat his purpose. A glorious example of half quotation was regarding the reconversion of a Hindu woman who had fallen in love with a Muslim. 'She (Hindu woman) should be taken by force and be given to the family.' [10] But Badauni did not mention the other part of the regulation which dealt with Muhammadan lady " nor should a Muslim woman who had been in love with a Hindu be prevented from joining Islam." [11] According to Badauni Akbar had ordered the destruction of mosques. But Badauni did not mention the date of the regulation and the occasion for it. The whole regulation would have been clear, had he mentioned that the regulation came after the Bengal rebellion when those mosques (unauthorised) were used as centres of rebellion

[10] Dabistan, II, p. 413.
[11] *Ibid.*

such as the Masjid-i-Zarar in the time of the Prophet.

In his blind fanaticism and spiteful venom against Faizi and Abul Fazl, he had lost the balance of his judgment and we think the real intention of Badauni was not so much to revile the Emperor as to revile the wickedness of the sons of Mubarak. In reviling them, he had to revile the Emperor more than he possibly intended to, only to show the length of the apostasy to which the Emperor had been led by ' the designing brothers.' In his anger Badauni sometimes said that Akbar was a Christian, another time that he was a fire-worshipper and a third time that he was a 'respecter of cows,' that is, he was a Hindu. "Akbar believed," said Badauni, " in the truth of the Christian religion and being willing to spread the doctrine of Jesus, ordered prince Murad to take a few lessons in Christianity and charged Abul Fazl to translate the Gospel." Du Jarric says that Akbar took some lessons in Portuguese himself so that he could follow their discussions in original. Soon after Badauni said that Akbar was a sun-worshipper and uttered one thousand and eight names of the Sun every morning.

We should not lose sight of the important fact that he began to write his Muntakhab in 1590 when he was labouring under the charge of absenting himself from the court without leave, when he was liable for the loss of a favourite book

of Akbar, named Khirad Afza, and when he was refused an interview at Bhambar after the discovery of his forgery of a certificate from Hakim Ain-ul-Mulk of Delhi. What better things could be expected of him at a time when his whole existence was at stake ? On the other hand one of his comrades of early years was enjoying the reputation of being the chief poet of the age, and another the chief *vakil* of the Empire. Indeed he was suffering from the complex of jealousy against his school mates. Smarting under a sense of injustice that his merit had not been properly recognised and respected, Badauni's hand could not give anything better.

Badauni dared not publish his Cream of History " Muntakhabat " during his life time ; when the book was published during the reign of Jahangir, he became so infuriated " at the baseness of the lies that he ordered the son of Badauni to be imprisoned and his property to be confiscated." He further took an agreement from all the book-sellers of the capital that they should not sell the book.[12] Even Khafi Khan says, " Badauni has said many things regarding the Emperor which are quite incredible and which it would be improper to repeat or commit to writing. Indeed if I should retain one-hundredth part of them it would be disrespectful to his memory." [13]

[12] Ain, Blochmann, Footnote 2, p. 104.

[13] Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul Lubab, Vol. I, p 196.

Badauni was a cynic by nature. He had no respect even for the nearest ties of human relationship. "Relations are like scorpions in the harm they do, therefore, be not directed by father's or mother's brother. For verily sorrow is increased by father's brother, and as for the mother's brother he is destitute of all good qualities."

If these be the ideas of a man about his cousin or uncle, can we expect anything better than what he wrote about Faizi or the Hindu official of the Emperor, we mean Birbal? Nowhere Birbal has been mentioned without his favourite adjective "hellish dog," a wretch. "In his venom he cast most disgraceful aspersions on Birbal that he had incest with his own daughter.[14] This is the man who wrote the history of Akbar; indeed it is true that tongue may lie but pen cannot, and however one tries to do so he is unconsciously found between the lines of his pen. To be fair to Akbar, we could only quote Major Nassau Lees and join with him in saying "it would be grossest piece of injustice to the dead Emperor to present the public[15] with Abdul Qadir's review of his character and no other." And V. A. Smith has done it.

[14] Badauni, II, p. 312.

[15] J.R.A.S., Great Britain, 1868.

CHAPTER VII

THE DIN-I-ILAHI IN PROMULGATION

Significance of the Promulgation

The Sufi creed of the Din-i-Ilahi was promulgated in the beginning of the year 1582. According to Bartoli there was a formal council before the promulgation of the Din-i-Ilahi,[1] and an "old Shaikh (Mubarak) was sent to proclaim in all quarters that in a short time the law to be professed throughout the Mughal Empire would be sent from the court and that they should make themselves ready to take it for the best and accept it with reverence whatever

[1] The authority of Bartoli regarding the formal council should not go unchallenged. It has not been touched by Nizamuddin or Abul Fazl, nor by any contemporary Christian or native authors. Badauni incidently referred to a council meeting for renovating the religion of the Empire. But what is that council? Was it the occasion for the Mazhar? Badauni who never spared Akbar for his religious opinions, should have given more details on the council and its proceedings; on the other hand Bartoli who compiled a book in 1663 A.D., three quarters of a century after the alleged council meeting, gave the account referred to. Moreover according to Bartoli one of the Shaikhs, a most distinguished old man, whom Smith identified as Shaikh Mubarak was sent to proclaim 'in all quarters the coming of the new creed.' Now Shaikh Mubarak was at that time a man of 82 years : was it possible to send him to all quarters at such an old age to proclaim the coming religion?

it might be.[2] We do not know anything more about the embassy of Mubarak; moreover the tone and language do not fit in with the Happy Sayings of Akbar, 'Why should I claim to guide men before I myself am guided.'[3]

Principles of the Din-i-Ilahi

Smith says that the principles of the system were not properly defined and there was a good deal of uncertainty as to its meaning till 1587. Really it was 'undefined,' as it was no new religion: it was the summing up of the old. In the absence of any written treatise on the subject there was much scope for imagination. Von Noer is of opinion that the system was like that of the Freemasons or Illuminati. So it was not necessary to declare it in public. Badauni also says that the Mujtahid of the new religion was the only repository of the fundamentals of the faith.[4] Badauni's narrative relates only to the exterior rituals of the creed and described the formalities observed by Akbar. Badauni gave his reader hardly any new information about the principles

[2] The language of the proposed embassy sounds exactly like the Biblical story of Jesus coming with new religion, 'Lo! Comes Light.' The whole passage of Bartoli (pp. 175-77) has a Biblical touch round it, and is most un-Mughal in atmosphere. The language does not fit in with the Mughal colour.

[3] Akbarnama, Appendix, 'Happy Sayings.'

[4] Badauni, II, p. 349

of the creed. Like an ordinary Mulla he identified the fundamentals with the collaterals, and formalities were mistaken for principles. Abul Fazl in Ain No. 77 on the subject of "His Majesty as the spiritual guide of the people," began in a Sufic strain but left the subject with a pious wish, "should my occupations allow sufficient leisure and should another term of life be granted me, it is my intention to lay before the world a separate volume on the subject."[5] His "occupations" gave him no leisure, nor "another term of life was granted" to him and we have lost a separate volume on the subject. The Portuguese missionaries who visited the court during this period had their peculiar mode of describing things, they generally mixed up gossip with fact which more often than not deprived truth of its essence if there was any.[6] The only author who narrated the fundamentals of the Din-i-Ilahi was Mohsin Fani who has described a part of it in his famous "Dabistan-i-Mazahib. The Dabistan did not directly discuss the Din-i-Ilahi but has indirectly expressed inner principles of the system through the mouth of the Philosopher in course of a dialogue. The authority of Mohsin Fani was Mirza Shah Muhammad, son of Baigh Khan who knew it directly from Azam Khan—a member of the Din-i-

5 Ain, Blochmann, p 166.

6 East India Association Journal, London, 1915, p. 298.

Ilahi. Mohsin Fani was a sympathetic observer unlike Badauni or Portuguese priests ; and there is a touch of romance in his way of speaking a thing. The Philosopher of the Dabistan who represented the Emperor at the end of a general debate where the champions of other faiths were present, propounded the Din-i-Ilahi in ten virtues :—

(1) Liberality and beneficence.

(2) Forgiveness of the evil doer and repulsion of anger with mildness.

(3) Abstinence from worldly desires.

(4) Care of freedom from the bonds of the worldly existence and violence as well as accumulating precious stores for the future real and perpetual world.

(5) Wisdom and devotion in the frequent meditation on the consequences of actions.

(6) Strength of dexterous prudence in the desire of marvellous actions.

(7) Soft voice, gentle words, pleasing speeches for every body.

(8) Good treatment with brethren, so that their will may have the precedence to our own.

(9) A perfect alienation from creatures and a perfect attachment to the Supreme Being.

(10) Dedication of soul in the love of God and union with God the preserver of all.

The whole philosophy of Akbar was: "The pure *Shast* and the pure sight never err."[8] Great stress was thus laid on purity of individual life and purity of outlook on affairs of life. Practices followed by Akbar and his "Happy Sayings" as quoted by Abul Fazl, bear out the truth that lay behind Akbar's philosophy.

In discussing the Sufi system of Akbar, we cannot lose sight of its rituals and priests, ceremonies and practices, initiations and symbols of brotherhood of the Sufi creed, for they are the concomitant parts of the system. Indeed in every religion whether primary or subsidiary, formalities are given as much prominence as the ideal to be worshipped. The development of a religion has in its background the religious experience of the propounder. The difference amongst great religious systems is based not on any difference in the ultimate ideal, for the object of worship is almost everywhere the same, but what they differ in, is in the form of worship. The war is on the *path* but not on the *destination*. Really speaking the formalities and rituals are no ends in themselves, but are only means to some end. But unfortunately the history of religion has shown that the forms apparently are regarded as ends, and ends lose themselves in the labyrinths of forms; and more new creeds have developed not by way of difference of fundamentals but by the

[8] Ain, No. 77, Blochmann, p. 166.

way of difference of formalities, rituals and ceremonies.

Priests

In the Din-i-Ilahi, there was no priesthood and that is why Blochmann[9] opines, "Akbar solely relying on his influence and example, had established no priesthood and had appointed no proper persons to propagate his faith." Von Noer says, "there was no priesthood in the Din-i-Ilahi it being confined to the select few." But to us it appears that the Din was never regarded by Akbar as a new religion and therefore, there was no need of a separate priesthood and separate church so natural and so common to the promulgation of a new faith. Moreover in Islam there is no priesthood and it has been condemned in unequivocal terms by the orthodox. From Islamic point of view, Akbar is justified in not having any priesthood in the system. Tajuddin was the expounder of the exterior rites of the creed.[10] The Mujtahids were Abul Fazl and his brother Faizi.[11] Azam Khan is said to have learnt the rules of the new order from Abul Fazl who according to Badauni, was the repository of the rules of *discipleship*. In fact separate priests were not necessary nor a

9 Ain, Blochmann, p. 212.
10 Dabistan, I., p. 94.
11 Badauni, II., p. 349.

mosque, for it was a Sufi order of Islam within Islam depending on individual experience of the follower and was only open to men who had attained a certain stage of development based on capacity. Akbar before allowing anyone to enter into the order made a "clearing search" and "every strictness and reluctance was shown by His Majesty in admitting novices."[12] Of course it could not be a fact that all those who entered into the order were without exception, actuated by a deep religious conviction; in some royal favour was the prime object, "though His Majesty did everything to get this out of their heads." Nor did Akbar himself play the part of a Pope, as Smith would have his readers believe, for Akbar himself used to say "Why should I claim to guide men before I myself am guided."[13] Like his great Indian predecessor Asok, 1800 years back, he issued a general order to all state officials to look after the spiritual deve lopment of all subjects.

"The Governor ought not to oppose the creed and religion of the creatures of God; in as much as a wise man chooses not his loss in the affair of this perishable world, how should he knowingly tend to perdition in the religious world which is permanent and eternal? If God be with his faith, then thou thyself carriest our controversy and opposition against God; and if God fails him and he know-

[12] Ain, Blochmann, Ain. No. 77, p. 165.
[13] *Ibid*, p. 165.

ingly takes the wrong way, then he proves to himself a rule of erroneous profession, which demand pity and assistance, not enmity or contradiction; he, who acts, and thinks well, bears friendship to every sect."[14] In the same Farman his officers were "required to show veneration for those who were distinguished by devotion to incomparable God, and pray in the morning and evening and at mindight."

Toleration was the basis of these instructions. Du Jarric informed us that Akbar often used to say, "God ought to be worshipped with every kind of veneration." Unconsciously his doctrine of non-intervention in religion was the best missionary for the propagation of the Din as Akbar conceived it. Again he says, "If the people wished it, they might adopt his creed and His Majesty declared that religion ought to be established by choice and not by violence."[15] Indeed, the Quran says that if God wished the whole world might have been Islamised but when God has not willed it, what right has man to compel people to come to Islam by force; Badauni says that some people asked Akbar why he did not make use of the sword the most convincing proof such as Shah Ismail at Persia had done. Akbar replied, "Confidence

[14] Dabistan, I, p. 97 and p. 429.

[15] Payne, *op. cit.* p. 25, footnote; Dabistan, I, p. 97. "There is no compulsion in religion." Quran.

لَا اِكْرَاهَ فِى الدِّيْنِ

in him as a leader was a matter of time and good counsel, and he did not require the sword." To Salim, Akbar said, "Are not five-sixths of all mankind either unbelievers or Hindus? If I were actuated by motives similar to those which thou ownest, what would remain to me but to destroy them all?" (Shea and Troyer, p. cxlvii.)

Initiation

The fitness of the intending entrants was tested by his readiness to sacrifice Property, Life, Religion and Honour. It was not that each of the *Ilahians* would be in a position to sacrifice all those four treasures of life all at one time; some might sacrifice one and some two and so on. The stage of the entrant was styled in a nomenclature peculiar to the order and was called "*Degree.*" They were stated to have obtained "One Degree" "Two Degrees" according as they were in a position to offer one or more of those precious possessions.[16] These four degrees were defined as "oath of fealty" in 1579 when the Din-i-Ilahi was not even thought of, as marks of loyalty to the throne. When the Din was promulgated they were included in the preliminaries. In Islam, politics and religion were often combined. So

16 In Sufi orders also are four stages according to the position, which the Murid attains in his devotional life. See *ante*, pp. 23-24.

In the Tradition (Hadis), Muhammad mentioned of different stages n spiritual order of a man's life.

what was defined as marks of loyalty in politics, became stages in spiritual eminence in religion. Badauni says, " courtiers of all shades and creeds irrespective of their religious opinions put their names down as faithful disciples of the throne."

Before introduction into the order the entrant was examined and if found fit, would be admitted for initiation.[17] The new entrant was introduced on Sundays.[18] The intending was to approach the Emperor with his turban on the ground and on approaching the Emperor should bow his forehead down to His Majesty's feet. Abul Fazl says, "this is symbolical; the turban is the sombol of conceit and selfishness, so putting off of the Turban symbolised the putting off of pride and conceit."[19] The Emperor as usual with Sufi mode of initiation, accepted him as his disciple and raised him from the ground and put the turban on his head. The initiation was by batch of twelve and by turns. They were to offer Zaminbos to the Emperor.

Symbol of Brotherhood and the Chelas

The " Initiated " was called " *Chelas*," an Indian term meaning " disciples."[20] They formed a brotherhood amongst themselves, and had a

17 Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, I, p. 60.

18 Akbar was born on Sunday and died on Sunday.

19 Ain Blochmann, p. 165. About the inscription there are various opinions.

20 Disciple is a common Sufi term. The *Ilahias* whom Akbar defeated near Afghanisthan in 1584 also called themselves " *Chelas*."

common symbol called "*shast*" in which the "Great Name" was engraved and the symbolic motto of "Allaho Akbar" was inscribed. The teaching inculcated "was the pure *Shast*" and "the pure sight shall never err."

Shast

The word "*Shast*" literally means "anything round" either "a ring or a bow." The shape of the symbol was like that of ring which may fairly be called '*Swastika*.'[21] It was wrapped in clothes studded with jewels and was worn on the top of the turban. It was their symbol of Brotherhood.

On the '*Shast*,' Badauni says that picture of Akbar was engraved. But others say that it contained only "Hu," the Great Name which might signify—

(*a*) *Allah*.
(*b*) *As Samad* ... The Eternal.
(*c*) *Al Haiy* ... The Living.
(*d*) *Alqayyum* ... The Everlasting.
(*e*) *Ar Rahman*
Ar Rahim ... The Merciful.
(*f*) *Al Mumin* ... The Protector.

Qazi Hamadani says that "the great name" is the word "*Hu*" or "*He*"—God—because it has

[21] Lowe translated Shast as 'fish hook.' Shast is also used to signify a girdle worn by Fire-worshippers or Hindus.

a reference to God's nature as it shows that He has no other at His side. Again the word " Hu " is not derivative. All epithets of God are contained in it. [22] Possibly Hamadani's interpretation is true particularly because " Hu " is a Sufi term and in his early youth Akbar used to chant these Sufi terms " Ya Hu " and " Ya Hadi " near the Anuptalao. And it is quite probable that this familiar word should be repeated in his new Sufi order.

Rules of Conduct amongst the Disciples

To the Emperor, the *Chelas* were to offer Zaminbos and prostrate before him. The King used to give them ' *Darshan* ' from his window called ' *Darshanīya Manzil* ' (House of Royal Appearance).[23] If a member met another he was to greet him with " Allaho Akbar " and the other was to respond with " Jalle Jalalahu."

[22] Ain, Blochmann, p. 162, F. N. 2.

Ordinarily a believer introduced himself by the tree of discipleship, *e.g.*, Ahmad, disciple of Alam, disciple of Byezid, disciple of Khabdin ending in the name of that disciple to whom he is sworn. But an Ilahian would introduce himself by his symbol " *Shast*."

[23] Smith says, " Sychophants and flatterers had come for alms and favours in the morning and assembled in front to have a *Darshan* ; some came with a sick baby, others with barren daughter. " many were cured by his miraculous powers." This may be true. Akbar, by his constant association with the Hindu Yogis, had developed some occult powers and used them for the good of his subjects. Abul Fazl gave some instances of such cures.

Prayer

That there were prayers in the system is evident from his own examples. Probably Akbar offered prayers three times and not five times in the orthodox manner. Akbar offered prayers after the death of Abul Fazl as is the custom with Muslims. Advice to provincial governors definitely ordinanced prayer three times a day— morning, evening and night.[24] Abul Fazl had his own mosque on his portico ; criers (Mu'-azin) for prayers were there. No separate mosque was raised for the Ilahians. There was the same Quran for all ; till the last day of his life Abul Fazl deemed it a part of merit to copy the Quran.

The usual customary form of " *As-Sallam-o-alai-kum* " and " *Alai-kum-us-Salam* " were changed. Abul Fazl explained that Akbar in laying down this mode of salutation intended to remind men to think of the origin of their existence and to keep the deity in fresh, lively and grateful remembrance." [25]

Practices of an Ilahian were—

(*a*) Not to feast after death,

(*b*) to feast of life during life,

(*c*) to avoid flesh as far as possible,

(*d*) not to take anything slain by one's ownself,

(*e*) not to eat with butchers, fishers and bird catchers,

24 Dabistan, Vol. I, p. 97.
Ain, Blochmann, pp. 158-59.

(*f*) not to cohabit with pregnant, old and barren women nor with women under the age of puberty.[26]

A disciple could be burnt or buried according to his own religious practices. Akbar lamented that the dead body of Birbal "had not been brought to his capital so that it could be burnt."[27]

[26] Dabistan, Vol. III, p. 91.

[27] Ain, Blochmann, pp. 204-205

CHAPTER VIII

THE DIN-I-ILAHI IN MOVEMENT

The measures adopted by Akbar for the propagation of the Din-i-Ilahi were much in advance of time, at least by 200 years. In Europe, the fire of the Inquistition had set ablaze its religious firmament; the prelude to the drama of contest between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants that was to come within the next half a century, was being arranged. The Jesuits in order to increase their brotherhood had fallen from the proud principles with which they had begun, and often had recourse to conspiracy and murder in the name of Jesus. In Islam, the bloody traditions of the bloodthirsty Ismailis were not yet forgotten; the Shia-Sunni contest between the Safavi neighbours and their Sunni rivals of Rum were but too well known to the circle of Indian brethren.

The systematic persecution of the Mehdists[1] continued throughout the 15th and 16th centuries of the Christian era. In the midst of those terrible traditions and unholy environments, it required no small Amount of courage of conviction and length of liberalism, to say that " religion ought to be established by choice and not by violence,' and that

[1] Ain, Blochmann, p. 169.

" what right has man to compel people to come to Islam by force." With vast resources at his command if he simply wished it, he could have turned at least half of India to Ilahism. Indeed he cried out in the agony of his soul, " Why should I claim to guide men, before myself am guided ? " and not "*Cuius Regio, Eias Religio*"—"Religion of the King is the religion of the subject." like his European contemporary?

The famous " Forty "[2] which he reorganised in 1582 after being disgusted with Mulla unchangeability and rigidity, had its own contribution to make. No historian, not even Smith has drawn any inference from the famous " Forty" and the Din, both coming at the same time. They were very closely related to each other. The debates in the Ibadat Khana were no longer as frequently held as they were at the beginning. The discussions and decisions on knotty points of law were now being done there by " The Forty " ; there was no need of a propaganda henceforth everything was to be " decided by reason and not by authority." Like the " Free masons " it was a grouping of the few enlightened minds bound together by common political allegiance, by the idea of ultimate good to humanity, breathing the spirit of the great man who occupied the centre, we mean Akbar, who was the embodiment of the forces of the liberalism of that age of Renaissance in

[2] Ain, Blochmann, p. 197. F. N. I.

India. That is why there is no roll register nor any definite statement as to the size and extent of the brotherhood. Abul Fazl said that the Emperor did not insist on conversion into his order even for "those who used to acknowledge to have received their spiritual power from the throne of his Majesty." They stood in need of no conversion though they were intimately connected with the circle of Akbar. The members of the Din-i-Ilahi may be divided into two groups :—

(*a*) those who accepted the creed in all its aspects, internal as well as external forms.

(*b*) those who accepted the "*Shast*" only.

Of the initiated disciples[3] have been mentioned,—

(1) Shaikh Mubarak.
(2) Shaikh Faizi.
(3) Jafar Beg.
(4) Qasim Kahi.
(5) Abul Fazl.
(6) Azam Khan.
(7) Abdus Samad.
(8) Mulla Shah Muhammad Shahadad.
(9) Sufi Ahmad.
(10) Mir Sharif Amal.
(11) Sultan Khwaja.

[3] A list has been prepared from stray references from different contemporary authors by Blochmann. But he did not mention Prince Salim.

(12) Mirza Jani Thatta.
(13) Taki Shustar.
(14) Shaikhzada Gosla Benarasi.
(15) Sadar Jahan.
(16) Sadar Jahan's son, no. I.
(17) Sadar Jahan's son, no. II.
(18) Birbal.
(19) Prince Salim.

It is very significant that only one of them, Birbal also called Birbar, was a Hindu. Badauni says that Akbar was not willing to include the Hindus as far as possible.[4]

Of the second class, 'there were many', says Abul Fazl. They were given "*Shast*" in batches of twelve on Sundays and had to pass the usual test before they were introduced to royal presence. No other centre for intiation has been mentioned for the Ilahians. This proves that it was not a proselytising creed but was only a Sufi order. As has been pointed out there was no separate mosque for them, and prayers were offered at least thrice daily.

The Contribution of the Ibadat Khana to the Din-i-Ilahi.—The principles of the Din, according to

[4] This statement of Badauni and the actual absence of Hindus in the circle of the Ilahians definitely refutes the suggestion that there was a political move of 'Imperial unification' behind the promulgation of the Din-i-Ilahi. If it were so, there would have been deliberate attempt to get the Hindus into the fold.

many, were thrashed out of the fire of the discussions of the Ibadat Khana. This is indeed true, so far as the destructive side of the Din-i-Ilahi was concerned. In its destructive phase, the Din has a causal connection with the Mulla orthodoxy, their immobility and pride. The abuse and misuse of their power and position as discovered during the distribution of the ' Aymas," the embezzlement of the pilgrim grant by Mir-i-Haj proved that all that glittered was not gold ; and their participation in the rebellion of Bengal and Behar shew the length to which religious intolerance could be brought in political affairs. The religious disputes of the Shias and Sunnis in the Ibadat Khana had led him to doubt the infallibility of both and convinced him of the necessity of a new outlook.

The Sufi brothers and their father Mubarak, Faizi Sarhindi, Abul Fath, Tajuddin by the light of their intellect had served as torch-bearers in the midst of the darkness of doubts. Constant associations with the saints of other creeds had proved to him that God might be perceived even by the saints of other religions. Time, spirit and Central Asian mysticism had given a romantic touch to all his actions; legacy of his heritage and his early political vicissitudes had made his mind more impressionable and more accommodating. Even if there were no discussions in the Ibadat Khana, changes would have come in some form or other. His birth in a Hindu house, his early association with

the polished Persians, his own impressionable mind, his Central Asian mystic heritage, the liberal spirit of the age, the forces of Renaissance, the Mehdi movement of the 10th Hijri and the influence of the contemporary Sufis and Saints had moulded his mind. That in India such a profound change of outlook would come was almost a certainty. Peculiar circumstances and favourable combination of forces had veered round that mystic child of Central Asia, born in the mystic land of Sind and nursed in a mystic association of Iran, and the child became the priest of the Change.

So far as the actual form of the Change was concerned much depended on the influence of Sufi brothers, the Mehdi movement and personality of Akbar. The general liberal tendency of time coupled with intellectual ferment could have produced no other form except a very eclectic, elastic and universa one. " His soul synchronised with the pantheistic ecstasy of the Vedas, the universal charity of Buddhism, the grandiose poetry of the Solar cult and the profound beauty of Islamic mysticism." Nine out of ten commandments, if not all ten, were extremely universal and could be found in almost every religion. Without going into their places in other religions, we may quote the following from the Quran and other eminent Sufi writers, both in and outside India, to show that they were absolutely Islamic in conception and ideology.

(1) Original Text from Dabistan :—

جود و کرم

Translation :—Liberality and beneficence.

Arabic parallel passage :—

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتّٰى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ

Translation :—You cannot attain goodness unless you spend most beloved things of yours. (Al-Quran).

Persian Sufi thought :—

درسخا کوش ای برادر درسخا
تا بیابی از بس شدت رخا

Translation :—

Try charity, Oh brother ! try charity :
You will get relief from terrible misery.
(Sadi.)

(2) Original Text from Dabistan :—

عفو از بد کار و دفع غضب بحلم

Translation :—Forgiveness of the evil-doer and repulsion of anger with mildness.

Arabic parallel passages :—

وَ الْكَاظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظَ وَ الْعَافِيْنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَ اللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ

Translation :—And those restrain their anger and pardon men, and Allah loves the doers of good to others. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

با تو گویم که چیست غایت حلم
هر که زهرت دهد شکر ببخشش

هر که بخراشـــدت جگر ببجفـــا
هم چر کان کـــرم زر ببخشش
کم مباش از درخت سایه فگن
هر که سنگت زند ثمر ببخشش

Translation :—

I tell thee what is forbearance,
Whoever gives thee poison, give sugar.
Whoever by force tears thy heart, give him gold as mine gives.
Be not less than shade-giving tree.
Whoever throws a stone at thee, give him fruit.
(Sadi.

(3) Original Text from Dabistan :—

تعفف از شهوات دنیـــاویه

Translation :—Abstinence from worldly desires.

Arabic parallel passages :—

اِعْلَمُوْا اِنَّما الْحَیٰوۃُ الدُّنْیا لَعِبٌ وَّ لَہْوٌ

Translation :—Know that this world's life is only sport and play. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

الحذر از حبّ دنیا الحذر
بہر نان و زر مخور خون جگر

Translation :—

Save thyself from the love of the world.
Drink not the heart's blood for bread and money.
(Bu Ali Qalandar.)

(4) Original text from Dabistan :—

فکر اخلاص از بند عالم کون و فساد و اذخار اسباب
التذاذ آن عالم دائم الوجود *

Translation :—Care of freedom from bonds of the worldly existence and violence as well as accumulating precious stores for future real and perpetual world.

Arabic parallel passage :—

وَمَا هٰذِهِ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا اِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَّ لَعِبٌ وَ اِنَّ الدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ
لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْكَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ *

Translation :—This worldly life is nothing but sports and the other world is the real life if you think properly. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

بضاعت بچندان که آری بری
وگر مفلسی شرمساری بری

Translation :—Accumulate your goods as far as you can, but if you have no accumulation you will be ashamed. (Sadi.)

(5) Original text from Dabistan.

ریاضت عقل و ادب در عواقب امور

Translation :—Wisdom and devotion in frequent meditations on consequences of action.

Arabic parallel passage :—

وَ الْعَاقِبَـــةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ

Translation :—The pious meditates on consequence of every action. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

ارپئی هر گریه آخر خنده ایست
مرد آخر بین مبارک بنده ایست

Translation :—He is blessed who looks the consequence of actions. (Jalaluddin Rumi—Masnavi.)

(6) Original text from Dabistan :—

قوت تصریف عقل در طلب عالیات امور

Translation :—Strength of dexterous prudence in the desire of marvellous action.

Arabic parallel passage :—

قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ

Translation :—Marvellous things have been expressed : if you only think them wisely. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

سرا پردهٔ چرخ گردنده بین
درو شمعهائی فروزنده بین

Translation :—Below the curtain of the cycle of the world, look at the lights that shine. (Sadi.)

(7) Original text from Dabistan :—

صوت نرم و لین قول و طیب کلام باهر فردی

Translation : —Soft voice, gentle words and pleasing speeches for everybody.

Arabic parallel passage :—

قُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا

Translation :—Speak with gentle and pleasing words. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

ای برادر گر خرد داری تمـــام
نرم و شیرین گوی با مردم کلام

Translation :—Oh brother ! If you have wisdom speak gentle and sweet words. (Fariduddin A ttar.)

(8) Original text from Dabistan :—

حسن معاشرت باخوان با آنکه اختیار ایشان بر اختیار خویش مقدم دارد *

Translation :—Good treatment with brethren so that their will may have precedence to our own.

Arabic parallel passage :—

وَ يُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

Translation :—Prefer (them) before themselves though poverty may afflict them. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufithought :—

عبادت بجز خدمت خلق نیست
تسبیح و سجاده و دلق نیست

Counting of beads, spreading of napkins (before Namaz) and hermit's gown (are no worship) but the service of brethren (is the only worship). (Sadi.)

(9) Original text from Dabistan.

اعراض از خلق بکلی و توجه بالکلیه بحق

Translation :—A perfect alienation from creatures and a perfect attachment to the Supreme Being.

Arabic parallel passage :—

فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللهِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ

Translation :—Fly to Allah, surely I am a plain warner from Him. (Al-Quran.)

Persian Sufi thought :—

ز دنیا ترک گیر از بهر دین تو
توکل بر خدا کن بالیقین تو

Translation :—For thy salvation, give up the world. Attach thyself to God with faith. (Shamsuddin Tabrizi.)

10. Original text from Dabistan :—

بذل روح از شوق بحق و وصول بحضرت کریم

Translation :—Dedication of soul in the love of God and in the union with God, the Benefactor.

Arabic parallel passage :—

قُلْ اِنَّ صَلٰوتِیْ وَ نُسُکِیْ وَ مَحْیَایَ وَ مَمَاتِیْ لِلّٰہِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِیْنَ

Translation :—Tell, O, prophet,
All my good actions, all my sacrifices, all my life and death are for Allah who is the preserver of all. (Al-Quran.)

Persion Sufi thought :—

گر وصال دوست مي داری هوس
نفس را با روح گردان هم نفس

Translation :—If you desire to meet with your friend (God) dedicate your life to the Soul (God) (Fariduddin Attar.)

So far as the last commandment was concerned it has a Vedantic touch. The eternal craving of the human soul for a union with the lord and the ultimate sublimation with him has no direct and strict Islamic background though many Sufis have stretched Quranic verse no. 163 chap. VI. part III as quoted above to mean some thing like that, and accepted it as a creed in their life and philosophy. As a Sufi, Akbar cried with brother Sufis like Sadi, Rumi, Jami, Hafiz and Shamshuddin Tabrizi, for union with Him ; and the Happy Sayings as quoted by Abul Fazl clearly illustrated the view point of the great questor. Regarding the practice of his own life, we find a profound influence of his

Hindu, Zoroastrian, Jain and Buddhist associates. As an inquisitive inquirer endowed with the spirit of reason, he learnt the Hindu alchemy and medicine and cultivated their Yoga system; like his Central Asian ancestor, he believed in astronomy and astrology; and after his association with the Zoroastrian Mobed, he believed that life might be lengthened by lightning fire or by the repetition of a thousand names of Sun. Following the Buddhist custom, he used to shave the crown of his head thinking that the soul passed through the brain. He turned into a vegetarian later in life; took one meal a day, slept for 3 hours daily; all these were actuated by a desire to lenghthen his life and there was no question of apostasy if a man attempted a process to lengthen his life. The reader must make a distinction between what Akbar himself followed and what an Ilahian was expected to follow. Much misconception has crept into the Din-i-Ilahi owing to misunderstanding of Akbar's personal practices and follower's practices; and for that Badauni is responsible.

The practices which he asked an Ilahian to follow were mostly Islamic in origin or had precedents in the actions of one or more renowned Islamic monarchs or saints. In chapter VI, the sanctity or authority behind his "Ains" has been quoted. No doubt that there is a Sufi touch throughout his life and actions, but this would have been no ground for branding Akbar as an apostate,

had he not touched the Mulla interest in the distribution of religious endowments and turned Them out of their privileged position.

Regarding court customs ceremonials ;—They were mainly Persian setting on Indian stage acted by a Turko-Mughal of Indian birth. Akbar had spent his early life amongst the Persians, who were in that age the French men of the East and were famous for their culture and refinement. From them, he imbibed a love for refinement and finish. Thus many Persian festivals, manners and customs were introduced. There is no reason to suppose that those Persian customs were introduced out of spite against Arabian Islam. His Persian mother, Persian association, Persian teacher, Persian kinsmen, Persian courtiers had cast a spell on that mystic Central Asian boy born in that age of transition. He had a genius for selection of men and appreciation of talents and if he found that a Persian deserved to be appreciated, he gave him what he deserved. Indeed, not out of religious spite but out of love for Persia, "the meet nurse" for that mystic child of the desert that he introduced Persian customs and manners and it had no connection with his apostasy. This may be said of many Khalifas of Arabia who when conquered Persia adopted and introduced many Persian customs and manners.

In the 16th century India, religious and intellectual upheavals were extremely favourable towards

the development of Sufi orders. Already there were 72 sects in Islam and the Mehdi movement had created a stir in the minds of men. The wide scope of the commandments, freedom of worship and eclecticism in practices of daily life have given the fraternity a distinct Sufi touch peculiar to the age. Like an orthodox Islamic Sufi, he believed in the unity of God; like a Hindu, he felt the universal presence of the Deity. To him the symbol of fire and sun "represented the Supreme Being in the letter of creation in the vast expanse of nature," as if he was a Mobed, and the Jain principles of harmlessness and sanctity of animal life had almost made him a royal *Vikshu*. The Persian etiquette and manners formed the formula of the daily life of an Ilahian generally.

He was even more eclectic in manners. Toleration was the basis of the whole system. The Quranic verses breathe a spirit of toleration and the Quran was the back-ground of his beliefs; Sufi thought gave him his inspiration for tolerance and not the Mulla interpretation of the Sacred Verses.

Now the question is, whether the adoption of the manners and customs of the contemporary world and their inclusion into the list of the court formalities signified his lapse from Islam,[5] or whether

5 Ref. Risal-i-Shibli.

(a) The Prophet himself adopted the firing machine during his life time. Chapter on Tarajman, p. 4.

(b) The Sahabis adopted many foreign social manners and spoke foreign languages—Persian, Hebrew and Syriac. Fathul Buldan, p. 474.

toleration granted to non-Muslims is enough to brand him as an apostate.

The Din-i-Ilahi or Din-i-Islam was not a new religion; it was a Sufi order with its own formula in which all the principles enunciated are to be found in the Quran and in the practices in the contemporary Sufi orders. Akbar did not insist on, nor did he like his own practices of daily life to be followed by all Ilahians. Many of his regulations and practices had no connection with the Din. Some came much earlier and some were later than the Din-i-Ilahi. The dice of the coin was cut 8 years prior to the Din, the Taslim of Allaho Akbar was formulated four years after. The gradual changes and adoptions showed that the Din was no clear-cut system of religion and had no distinct ethical code beyond that formulated by the Ten commandments. Thus changes in the social, economic and political life of the state would have come even if the Din were not there. The participation of the Jains, Sikhs, and Christians was between 1582-92, the Din was evolved early in 1582 before they had come to the court. So the Din had but little or no connection with those faiths. The Din was no

Khalifa Mamun introduced many laws of Ardesir of Persia. His ministers were more Zoroastrians than Muslims. Many Hindu customs were introduced in royal paraphernalia such as, Royal umbrella, weighing against gold by orthodox Muslim Kings long before Akbar in India.

religion outside Islam, nor cut out of it. An Ilahian never regarded it as a separate religion; an Ilahian was often as orthodox as a Mulla. When toleration was granted to the Christians, permission was given to them for making conversion. Azam-khan, an Ilahian, grew furious and vehemently protested against it. Faizi, the Mujtahid of the Din-i-Ilahi, made conversions of the Hindus into Islam even after the Din was promulgated and regarded it an act of merit to copy the Quran. Some suggest that the death of Abul Fazl was procured by Salim as a protest against his father's religion for which Abul Fazl was supposed to have been responsible.

But this is not warranted by the way in which Jahangir spoke of his father in the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, "My father never for a moment forgot God." There were personal motives with Salim; a feeling of jealousy, a sense of insecurity and complex of inferiority to Abul Fazl served as prime motives of the murder. Bir Singh Bundela, a Hindu, did the murder and not a Muslim. Had it been purely a religious protest why was not a Muslim hired for it? Smith wants to say that Akbar ceased to be a Muslim at least for a time and quoted Akbar's own speech to support his view. This misconception of Smith was due to his misreading of the text of the Ain-i-Akbari. The India Office copy from which Mr. Yusuf Ali quoted gives a true version of the text. In an open meeting of the

East India Association in London in which both Dr. Smith and Mr. Yusuf Ali were present, Smith was shown his mistake.

The formula of the Din "there is no God but God, and Akbar is his representative"—as Badauni says, " was not a general creed of the Ilahians, but was meant only for the harem." Even if it were meant for all Ilahians, there would be no necessary opposition to Muslim Kalema (Ref. Hadis), as has been suggested by Mr. Yusuf Ali in his famous article in the E.I. Association Journal. It does certainly imply a gloss which indicates Akbar's attitude[6] towards the millennial ideas of the time in which he was confirmed by the warring dissensions on open problems of religion in the Ibadat Khana.[7] May be that he was to some extent attracted by a motive similar to that of Erasmus, the Ilahians are as much non-Muslim as were the Covenants of Scotland non-Christians.[8] The inscription composed by Abul Fazl under instruction from his great master on a temple in Kashmir, illustrates beautifully the soul and craving of that master mind :—

6 E. I. Association Journal, London, 1915, pp. 296-298.

7 Badauni, II, pp. 201-202.

8 Even during his own time the practices of Akbar were misinterpreted by the orthodox class. Abdulla Khan Uzbeg wrote to Akbar charging him with apostasy to which Akbar replied refuting those charges which have been preserved in the letters of Abul Fazl, called Daftar-i Abul Fazl, compiled by his son-in law.

O, God, in every temple I see people that worship Thee, and in every language I hear spoken people praise Thee.
Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee.

Each religion says, 'Thou art One, without equal.'
If it be a Mosque, people murmur Thy holy prayer and if it be a Christian Church people ring Thy bell from love of Thee.
Sometime I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometime the Mosque,
But it is Thou whom I search from temple to temple.
Thy eclect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy : for neither of them stands behind the screen of Thy truth.
Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox :
But the dust of the petal belongs to the heart of the perfume-seller."[9]

[9] Indian Antiquary, Col. Wolesey Haig, History of Khandesh.

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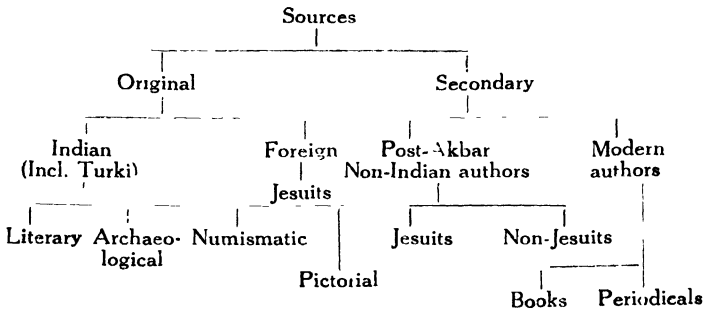

Original Indian

(1) Akbarnama by Abul Fazl is by far the best history written by any historian on the subject. It comes up to the year 1602.

(2) Ain-i-Akbari by Abul Fazl may be regarded as supplementary to Akbarnama; it is of a very high value.

(3) Tabqat-i-Akbari by Nizamuddin. It is an official chronology—it does not deal with Akbar's religion directly. It covers up to the year 1593-4.

(4) Muntakhab-ut Twarikh—by Abdul Qadir Badauni. This is a very valuable source book for the study of Akbar's religion. He was a staunch Mulla and belonged to the anti-reform party in the state (up to 1595-6). 1924 A.S.B. Tr. has been used.

(5) In Najatur-Rashid by the same author; the marriages of Akbar are mentioned.

(6) Tarikhi-Alfi "the History of Thousand years" by Maulana Ahmad written under orders of Akbar. The genesis of this book lay rooted in a belief that Islam was coming to a close 1000 years after Muhammad.

(7) Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri or Jahangir-nama by Jahangir. It gives some description of the Din-i-Ilahi specially of the formalities and ceremonies of initiation of the disciples.

(8) Waqiyat-i-Jahangiri, by Jahangir; It gives some interesting incidents of Akbar's life and throws light on his religion.

(9) Humayun-nama and Babar-nama give some interesting information on the heredity of Akbar.

(10) Malfuzat-i-Timuri written by Timur himself in Turki. It is available in Persian and English translations. Though full of self praise, it throws much light on Timurid family customs.

(11) Tarikh-i-Ferishta by Qasim Hindu Shah *alias* Ferishta. It is very widely known in India because it was the source-book of Elphinstone. But it cannot be very much relied upon as the author depended more on unrecorded traditions without taking sufficient pains to scrutinise them.

(12) Dabistan-i-Mazahib, written probably by Mohsin Fani about half a century after Akbar's death. This book contains very interesting dialogues of the Ibadat Khana and maxims of the Din-i-Ilahi.

(13) Akhbar-ul-Akhyar by Abdul Haq is valuable for a knowledge of Muslim saints in India up to 1572.

(14) Istalehat-i-Sufia by Ziaul Indabi; it is of help of interpretations of Sufi terms. The book was published in 1322 A.H.

Jesuit Sources

Portuguese accounts (Jesuits)—V. A. Smith relies on Jesuit authorities too much. The Jesuits were hardly reporting or observing as historians. They were primarily missionaries and largely fortune-seekers. Their visions were often prejudiced.

(1) "The first Jesuit Mission to Akbar" published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1914). It is a translation of Mongolicae Legationis commentarius by Monserrate.

(2) Monserrate's account of Akbar written in 1582 published in Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1912. The Relacam has become famous in this connection.

(3) Persian Farmans granted to the Jesuits by the Moghal Emperor published by Hosten. In them the motive of calling the Portuguese to the court of Akbar may be found.

(4) Peruschi is the earliest printed authority for the missions.

(5) Bartoli supplies valuable, though second-hand, materials on Akbar's religion.

(6) De Souza's account is of a later date, published in 1710 and contains the account of missions from 1564-1585.

(7) Payne's famous work " Akbar and Jesuits " is a work in which Payne made a very reliable scrutiny of Smith's Jesuit sources. He has proved that Smith's Jesuit references are misleading.

(8) Maclagan's recent publication (April, 1932) "Jesuits and the Mogor" is a book of considerable interest but is not absolutely faultless.

Non-Jesuits Sources

In these sources, occasional references may be found about Akbar and the Mughal Empire, sometimes, fantastic; but they have very little connection with Akbar's religion. The prominent of them are Fitch, Mildenhall and Roe.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Modern Writers

(1) Elphinstone's History of India. The book was published in 1841 when the sources of Indian history were not fully worked out. Though ably written, it does not satisfy a present-day scholar.

(2) Von Noer, the great German historian of Akbar, is possibly one of the few European writers who have written eastern chronicles with respect and

reverence. Smith has put him in the roll of a panegyrist like Abul Fazl.

(3) "Akbar the Great Mogul," by V. A. Smith. He does not generally praise an eastern monarch nor can he brook any other praising an eastern monarch. He is a great historian no doubt but he is biased and anti-east.

(4) The translators of the original histories of the Mughal such as Blochmann, Gladwin, Raverty, Mr. and Mrs. Beveridge, Lowe, Briggs and others have often left very interesting notes on the religious views of Akbar. Of them certainly Blochmann and Beveridge are very useful.

(5) E. G. Browne, Literary History of Persia. In it we find references to Sufi doctrines.

(6) Titus, Indian Islam. This book written from a Christian's point of view and may be read with interest.

(7) Mohammad Habib, Sultan Muhammad of Ghazni; different aspects of Semitic and Aryan outlook on religion has been discussed in it. The introduction is of special merit.

(8) Harold Lamb, Timur the Earth Shaker (Temojin). It is a general study on Timur the Lame.

(9) Parker, "Thousand Years of the Tartars." It gives a vivid picture of early Turks in their native home.

(10) Encyclopaedia of Religion, Vol. I. Article on Akbar by Beveridge has been written purely in the light of Western interpretations.

(11) History of the Saracens, by Ameer Ali.

(12) Erskine, How was India Governed by Islam ?

(13) Murray's Discoveries and Travels in Asia, 1802, Vol. II.

(14) Ethnography of Upper India by Dr. Prichard. (Royal Geographical Society publication.)

(15) District Gazetteers of Delhi and Agra.

(16) Studies in Mysticism, by Nicholson. It is an excellent book of its kind.

(17) J. J. Modi, "Parsis at the Court of Akbar," Bombay, 1903. It is a good production but requires to be rewritten in the light of modern facts.

(18) Hughes, Dictionary of Islam. It is a *vade-mecum* for students of Islamic History.

(19) Pringle Kennedey, History of the Great Moghuls. After Howworth's History of the Mongols, it is very informative.

(20) History of India as told by its Own Historians, by Elliot and Dowson, Vols. V-VII. They contain some good extracts from originals and may be consulted by beginners in the field.

(21) Dineschandra Sen's History of the Bengali Language is valuable for Hindu gods in Muslim poetry.

(22) Sind and its Sufism by Gulraj. It is a Theosophical publication and gives beautiful glimpses of the tenets of Sufis of Sind.

(23) H. G. Wells, History of the World. Chengiz's life has been put in a new light. It is not after all a history.

(24) Quran, by Muhammad Ali.

Urdu (Modern)

(1) "Arab aur Hindustan ke Talluqat," by Maulana Suleiman Nadvi. The relation between India and Arabia is excellently depicted in Urdu. It may be of use to those who want to work on the reciprocal influence of Hinduism and Islam. Allahabad.

(2) "Maqalat-i-Shibli," Vol. I. Here the Muslim writers of Hindu religion have interpreted Hinduism in their own light. Azamghar.

(3) Asar-i-Sayeed. It treats of Muslim patronage of Hindu religion.

(4) Darbar-i-Akbari, by Muhammad Hosain Azad is very important Urdu work, though not purely historical; it contains many interesting details. Lahore.

Bengali

(1) "Nana Charcha," by P. Chowdhury-(Birbal) for Nine gems of Akbar. Calcutta.

(2) "Madhya Juge Bharater Sadhana," by Kshitimohan Sen. Excellent lectures on Hindu-Moslem fusion in the Middle Ages of Indian History. Calcutta.

(3) " Moghul Raj Bansha," by Ram Pran Gupta for details of Turko-Moghul family customs. Calcutta.

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(1) " Hindi ke Mussalman Kabi," by Ganga Prasad. (Muhammadan poets of Hindi Literature.) It is an excellent collection and should find a place in every Library. Benares.

(2) Life of Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan. Benares.

(3) Nine Jems of Akbar's Court. (Nawratan.) Benares.

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(2) Mughal Architecture of Fatehpur Sikri has been described and illustrated by Smith.

(3) Akbar's Tomb at Sekandra, by Smith.

(4) Abdul Latiff, Agra, Historical and Descriptive, " with an account of his court and of the modern city of Agra."

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(1) Thomas, "Coins of the Pathan Kings of Delhi illustrated by coins, inscriptions and other antiquarian remains." History of Akbar's coinage has some interest in the change of Monogram from "Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim" to "Allaho-Akbar."

(2) H. N. Wright, Coins of the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

(3) Lane-Poole, Coins of the British Museum: The Mughal Emperors.

Pictorial

Uptil now no history has been attempted through pictures, drawings and paintings of Mughal period. There are materials enough to form a pictorial history of Akbar. Pictures may be found in the Museums at Delhi and Agra, in London Museums and in the show rooms of the Delhi Fort. Some old families descending from the period still possess many beautiful pictures and drawings of contemporary India. So far as religion is concerned, pictures of Khankas, Ibadat Khana, shrines and tombs are valuable.

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(2) Cal. Review., Jan., 1906	Akbar's Religious policy. (Karkaria).

(3) Cal. Review Oct., 1906	Akbar's Religious Policy by Karkaria.
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(5) J.R.A.S., XXI, 1904—	Parsis at the Court of Akbar by J. J. Modi.
(6) Jain Shasana. Vir. San., 2437.	Published at Benares.
(7) Cal. Quarterly Oriental Review, Vol. I., 1824.	
(8) J.R.A.S., Vol. III, pp. 192-212.	Mughal Paintings re : Akbar's Religious Discussions.
(9) Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. 1922.	Monserrate (Hosten.)
(10) Calcutta Review, Jan., 1897.	Akbar and the Parsis.
(11) J.R.A.S., 1915, pp. 237-43.	Smith's Article on Akbar's Court.
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(20) Article published from Bombay, 1866. By Prof. Rahestsek "Emperor's Repudiation of Islam."
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* References in connection with Ain-i-Akbari are from the translation by Blochmann, Ed. 1873 A.S.B.

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